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THE EARLY SPREAD OF RELIGIOUS IDEAS

ESPECIALLY IN THE FAR EAST

REV. JOSEPH EDKINS, B.A. D.D.

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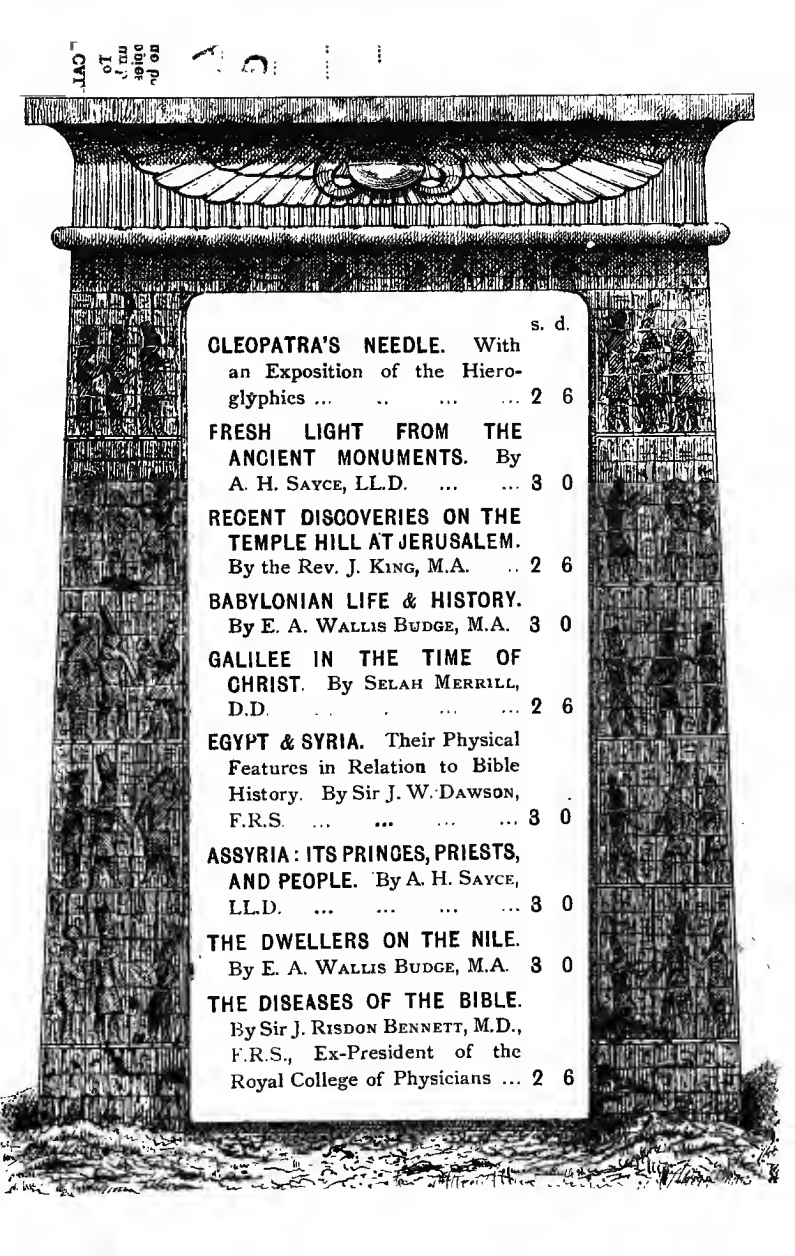

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XIX

THE EARLY SPREAD OF

RELIGIOUS IDEAS

ESPECIALLY

IN THE FAR EAST

BY

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PREFACE

THE contents of this little book were delivered as lectures at the Indian Institute, Oxford; at New College, Hampstead; at Cheshunt College; and in the Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, at a meeting of the London Congregational Union.

The lectures have now been changed into chapters, and various additions and corrections have been made. The main idea through all has been to sketch briefly the chief points in primaeval religious teaching. Having lived among the adherents of Eastern religions for forty-five years, I have become strongly convinced that what good teaching their books contain is derived from early revelation. If research be carefully conducted, it will be possible to recover the primaeval history of mankind in religion, as in other branches of human progress. The result will be, as our aim ought to be,

> 'To vindicate Eternal Providence,
> And justify the ways of God to man.'

The aim of this book is to draw attention in a brief way to the mass of information upon primaeval religion

gathered in ancient Oriental literature, as well as in the languages of Eastern countries. Treasures of knowledge are enshrined in that literature and in those languages, and if we wish to learn the early history of the idea of God we must seek it in the ages before the Semites and Indo-Europeans began their career. The knowledge of God in the human consciousness reached its second stage about five thousand years ago, when these races settled down in the lands they now occupy. The Hindus and Persians left Europe and came back to Asia, the home of their forefathers, fighting their way as they came. The Semites were driven by this invasion from their temporary home in Central Asia and Persia to Arabia and Mesopotamia. Language shows that mankind began their life on the earth with a common speech, worship, and religion. If language is treated fairly, and the comparison of the vocabularies patiently pursued, this fact comes clearly into view.

In the ages before Abraham there was revelation, and it is recoverable. This is my main point. I have aimed to prove it and to illustrate it. The first revelations were made to men who preceded on the chart of time both the Chinese in China and the Accadians in Babylonia. The Accadians inherited the tradition of those revelations in Babylonia and the Chinese in China. In the providence of God it was by genealogical records in the family of Shem, as we have them in Genesis, that the progress of religion from the beginning was to be preserved to coming ages; but we must also diligently search into the Babylonian traditions. The custody of

primitive revelation was left not only to the Jews, but to all those races to whom it came. The revelations made to Moses and the prophets were specially entrusted to the care of the Jews. The monotheism of China and Persia are a survival of the revelation made to Enoch, Noah, and other primaeval patriarchs. It was given to both these countries to preserve the immemorial tradition of burnt sacrifices, of the duty of prayer, of a divinely taught moral law, and of the doctrine of a future life.

In an age when the eye of criticism is directed with an intensity never exceeded to the work of the Hebrew prophets, there is need of a testimony to the exceedingly important fact that the revelations made to Noah and Enoch are recorded not only in the first book of Moses, but are to be found, interpenetrated with human thoughts and mixed and modified in a hundred ways, in the works of Chinese, Hindu, and Persian sages. The idea of God became trinitarian in China and India in the later development of religious thought in those countries. But it became polytheistic too, and polytheistic religion grew more luxuriantly as time went on. God in the beginning, when they were preparing to migrate from their original home, imparted a real light to mankind, but it was bedimmed in the course of ages, and human thought was substituted for divine truth in all the many empires and kingdoms of the East. Though bedimmed, that light was, however, not obliterated, and it is the duty of the Christian investigator, in seeking to recover primaeval religious teaching, not only to decipher cuneiform tablets, but to study with a purpose the classical

books of all Eastern countries. He must also inquire into all trans-oceanic migrations, and their effects as seen in mythological tradition, in islands scattered over the Pacific Ocean and in America. Further, he must collect all religious words in the languages of the East, compare them together and impartially judge how matters really stand. In carrying out this programme of work, my firm conviction is that he will find himself confronted by irresistible proofs of the original unity of language and religion. Nor will he fail to recognize that the primaeval gift of divine revelation was one of the chief efficient forces which saved men from falling into barbarism, and led them to the invention of all the civilized arts.

CHAPTER I

THE PRAE-MOSAIC ORIGIN OF THE BOOK OF GENESIS

THE early invention of writing in Asia has greatly added to the value of religious tradition in Asiatic countries. The habit of recording historical events secured from oblivion many interesting fragments of ancient usages and occurrences. From the first, God communicated His will to His creature man in the form of revelation. Born with an animal nature, man also had intellectual and moral powers, with a divine light and spiritual instincts, leading him to respond to the commands and instruction of his Creator. The primaeval religious history of our race has left many vestiges in Asiatic literature.

In China, India, Tartary, Tibet, and Japan the early inhabitants when they arrived would retain features of the first revelations imparted to mankind before the days of Noah and Abraham. This we see in the wide extension of monotheism in China, Persia, Arabia, and Palestine. The people in these countries have always felt themselves under a divine law of right and wrong. The belief in a future state has widely prevailed, but it has been marked by less of assured certainty, and found its way more slowly from kingdom to kingdom, than either

monotheism or the moral law. There has also been belief in revelation and the incarnation of God in human form, as also in a method of redemption from sin, and in the efficacy of prayer. There is, in fact, so much that is good and true in the ideas of the old Asiatic nations that we are compelled to recognize a divine light guiding mankind in the early ages of the world. The Sosiosh[1] of the Persians, the Buddha of the Hindus, indicate religious faith and hope, and point back to a time when God spoke to mankind by the lips of prophets more plainly than afterwards. For when the great human family had become scattered, and had departed from the seats of primaeval revelation, they were left by God more to themselves.

Divine revelation did not begin with Moses, nor with Abraham, nor with Noah. It began with man's appearance on the earth. Man received from his Maker the faculties of the soul, and from that time forward there was revelation. The same powers, intellectual and spiritual, which enabled mankind to construct the primaeval language, also rendered religion possible. The farther we go back in our inquiries into language and ancient religious tradition, the purer will be the form of men's ideas on religion at which we shall arrive, and the more valuable the results we may expect to recover from those sources of archaic knowledge.

Language itself has to be searched, and the vocabularies of the various families compared, that we may know when and how mankind obtained clear ideas of God, of the soul, of moral law, and of the future state.

Among the books to be examined, to teach us what

[1] Son of Zoroaster. Comes to free men from death and decay.

the primaeval revelation was, the Book of Genesis stands first in importance. The authority of this book is sustained by the testimony of the other portions of the Old Testament, and also by the use made of it in the New Testament by our Lord and His Apostles. The Christian Church receives the account of the primaeval history of mankind, found in the Book of Genesis, as the ancient Word of God, on the testimony of the New Testament and that of the Jewish Church. By the criticism of the day we have learned more respecting the parts of which the first book of the Pentateuch is made up. Criticism has shown that it consists of two sets of documents; but as to its age we shall do well to regard it as pre-Mosaic for the following reasons:—

1. The knowledge the writers possess of Babylonia and the dispersion of nations, as well as of Egyptian affairs, is that of authors who could only belong to the times before Moses.

2. The inscribed tablets from Tel el Amarna show that in the age of Egyptian sovereignty over Palestine before the days of Moses, the Babylonian writing was in use for all official purposes. The most likely explanation of the origin of Genesis is, then, that it was a history compiled by writers who read cuneiform Babylonian tablets, and wrote themselves with the new Phœnician alphabet, just then getting into general use.

3. The Book of Genesis is genealogical, and as such would accompany the remains of Joseph to Palestine. In Asiatic kingdoms just such books of genealogy, mixed with history as the Book of Genesis, are buried with monarchs and persons of distinction.

Josephus says that the priests of his nation all carefully

preserved their genealogies, in Babylon and Egypt as well as in Palestine. The preservation of Genesis is in part due to the care of priests, and, like the Books of Chronicles, it contains first genealogies and then detailed narratives. A copy of such a book as this would, according to Oriental custom, be conveyed to the tomb of any ruler of a country or province and buried with him. When Moses took with him the bones of Joseph, such a book as this would naturally accompany them. In Genesis were embraced the family records of Adam, Noah, Shem, Terah, Isaac, Ishmael, Esau and Jacob. The sentence 'the book of the generations of,' or 'these are the generations of,' indicates genealogical records in reference to the individual mentioned. Such records were written during the lifetime of the person, and a copy placed with him in his tomb after his death. In the third volume of the *Chinese Classics*, Professor Legge has translated a Chinese genealogical record of a Chinese sovereign prince called the 'Bamboo Book of Chronological Records[1].' It contains also a history of China, and was found in the tomb of a sovereign prince five centuries after his interment. A person of Joseph's rank would have such a book compiled for his use while living.

In the time of the kings of Judah and Israel, such records were called *sepher dibre hayamim*, the Book of Acts of Days of any king, or of the kings generally. The name followed the title of the book, being connected by the preposition *le* 'of.' This usage would commence with King Saul. For the chronicles of the Persian kings the same name is used in Esther vi. 1.

[1] Chu shu ki nien.

The Book of Genesis differs from the Books of Kings and Chronicles in the use of the phrases 'book of the generations,' 'these are the generations.' Though there are many genealogies in the First Book of Chronicles these phrases do not occur. In Matt. i. 1, the singular is employed, 'the book of the generation of Jesus the son of David.' Thus Genesis stands alone as a prae-Mosaic book, framed according to Babylonian, Egyptian, and contemporary Palestinian models; compiled by the direction possibly of successive heads of clans or persons of elevated positions in society, like Joseph. Joseph as viceroy would require such a book as Genesis to serve as his family genealogy, supplemented by history.

The Book of Genesis, then, was a book made up of genealogical records carried back to the first ancestor, and it consists of documents compiled in succession, to be afterwards laid up in the libraries and tombs of the clan patriarchs for whose use the authors prepared them. In them we find ground for regarding the languages of Babylonia as the first in which divine revelation was recorded. The reason of this was that writing was first invented in that country.

Before the introduction of cuneiform writing revelation and sacred history could only be conveyed by oral tradition, as the Vedas were long preserved in India. The invention of writing in Babylonia, about B.C. 4000, was followed by Egyptian and Chinese modes of writing, which were both of them based on the Babylonian. The origin of Hebrew literature was in transcription and translation from cuneiform documents, and the activity of Moses as the chief founder belonged to the period of the early spread of the Phœnician writing. The Books

of Genesis should then, according to this view, be regarded as Joseph's book of genealogies, made in the ancient way for his personal use in the Hebrew language. It would be chiefly based on the records brought by Jacob from Palestine.

If the Book of Genesis be accepted as the work of scribes, section after section making use of the Phœnician mode of writing in the time of the patriarchs, and chiefly under Joseph's direction, we can still regard it as a book written at the time of which it records the history. The scribes of those days were transcribers, and they were in the employ of chiefs of clans. A prophecy like that of Isaac regarding his sons when he was old and his eyes were dim would be written down by the scribe he employed. The scribe we must suppose would share in Isaac's faith, devoutness, and inspiration. We see in Genesis that the genealogical record of the patriarchs was the germ from which Hebrew history grew. The evangelist Matthew wrote his Gospel on this as a model, and therefore commenced it with the genealogy of Christ, and continued it with narrative. But invaluable as it is the Book of Genesis is in the early parts so brief and incomplete that we are obliged to look beyond it for information, and must make search in the Zendavesta, the Vedas, the Chinese sacred books, and in the Buddhist Sutras. If God spoke to man by Adam, Enos, Enoch, and Noah, as Christians believe He did, the truths and duties He taught must exist in some form in the literature of their descendants, among whom are the nations which possess these sacred books.

Language itself furnishes us with a variety of divine names, a series of moral terms, and a mass of information

in regard to the spiritual nature of man and his ideas on the future state. We place the languages in their order. The Hebrew is post-diluvian. The Chinese, the Mongol, the Tibetan are older. We must extend our chronology sufficiently to allow of the growth of the Mongol, Tibetan, Chinese and some other forms of speech in the Far East. They belong to the antediluvian as well as to the post-diluvian ages. Where literature fails us in the countries in which these languages are spoken, old vocabularies come to our aid. Words themselves are an index to the religious thinking of the races of the primaeval world. Traditions of a written sort are not found in Tibet and Mongolia. In such countries the native vocabularies contain very valuable information as to the religious and moral state of the primaeval inhabitants of those regions, and so also does Shamanism in both these countries. This religion is very little known. It is best described by the Russians, and by mediaeval travellers before Buddhism had supplanted it in Mongolia. In Tibet it is the Bon religion. In Japan it is the Shinto. In China it is Tauism. It does not tell us much of elevated religious truth. But it has to be studied.

The study of the sacred books of Eastern nations is an easier task. A literature renders religious ideas intelligible. The translations by Darmesteter and West in the *Sacred Books of the East* open to us the once inaccessible lore of the Parsees. The Zendavesta helps us to acquire a knowledge of those dogmas of the ancient religion of the Persians which were propagated by them among the populations of India, China, Tartary, and Japan with the most remarkable results.

Then there are the sacred books of the Hindus,

committed to writing about B.C. 300. They were written by a people firmly wedded to ceremonies, devoted to metaphysical argument, extremely fond of legend, delighting to weave cosmogonies.

We also have to make search in the ancient history and poetry of the Chinese, in their books of religious philosophy, ritual, and divination. Six volumes by Professor Legge in the *Sacred Books of the East* open a rich field for inquiry.

A wide and fertile source of information is found in translations from Assyrian and Egyptian documents recently deciphered. In *Records of the Past* invaluable fragments of religious teaching have been made accessible.

The spirit with which the search for vestiges of primaeval revelation should be conducted ought to be that of devout recognition of God's truth wherever we find it. With this should be conjoined fidelity to fact, nor ought the investigator to forget that humanity is God's child, and as such man at first received a divine training. 'God made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions,' or thoughts of their own imagination and methods not revealed, but invented by themselves. Further, the primaeval history of man should be looked on as capable of recovery. The conditions and environment of man at the beginning were simple, but not savage, but we soon find mankind treading the downward path. Degradation becomes the law of man's life. In Dr. Robertson Smith's work on the religion of the Semites he traces Judaism to the local religions of Syria and Arabia. Deborah the prophetess sat under a palm-tree to judge Israel. He,

without necessity apparently, connects this with tree worship, which was not uncommon in that part of the world in ancient times. My idea is, on the contrary, that we should search for the truths of which local religious ideas are degraded forms. Truth was at first divine, and as we know what primitive Christianity became in mediaeval Europe, so we should in heathen customs and beliefs search for the divine elements from which they sprang. Christian theology suffers if we trace the ancient laws and usages of the Jews to a heathen origin. If on the other hand we trace heathen beliefs to a divine origin, we may hope to aid the Christian cause among intelligent heathens, who will accept our religion more readily when we discover something divine in their own[1].

And now how far can we lift the veil which hangs over primaeval times and penetrate into the religion of the earliest men?

[1] For other proofs of the prae-Mosaic character of Genesis, Principal Cave's *Inspiration of the Old Testament* may be consulted.

CHAPTER II

PRIMAEVAL MONOTHEISM IN CHINA AND PERSIA

THE origin of the ideas held by the Chinese on God and that of their mythology are lost from history's page, but those ideas are a valuable witness to the fact that in the earliest times mankind were monotheists. Dwelling far to the East, the Chinese received contributions of Western knowledge at a late date, and old modes of religious thought were among them retained for a long time in their primitive state.

In treating this subject it will be proper to commence with stating what the oldest Chinese books say of God. In the worship of the second monarch mentioned in the Book of History, the emperor Shun, B. C. 2300, it is said that he offered the sacrifice *Lui* or *lut*, 'round,' that is, the round sacrifice, to Shangti, the Supreme Ruler. The word round refers to the sacrifice on the round open altar erected for this worship, on which the sacrifices spread out would be arranged in a circle, in accordance with the shape of heaven. He then offered *the spread-out sacrifice* to the six divinities of the second class. The term Shangti may, from theological resemblance, be identified with the Ahuramazda of the Persians; and the divinities of the second class in the Chinese account will then be the spirits who preside over water, wood, fire, metal, earth, and the animal creation in the Persian

religion. They have no names in the Chinese classics. They are an incipient or germinant polytheism. They became the Amesha Spentas of the Zendavesta. Darmesteter says they were at first personifications of virtues and moral or liturgical powers, but, not resting here, they severally, in imitation of the activity of Ahuramazda, took a portion of the world under their care. The third sacrifice was that which respects the four quarters of space and the natural objects lying there, that is, the hills and rivers. This sacrifice was called Wang, or the 'looking sacrifice.' The mountains selected were four, and the reason of their choice would be adaptation, on account of local legends attaching to these mountains, convenience of access, conspicuous height, and ancient custom. The fourth and last sacrifice was the 'universal offering' presented to all spiritual beings who have charge of anything in Nature.

In these sacrifices some were burnt, and others offered whole, as for a banquet. Fruits, vegetables, and various sorts of grain were also offered.

That Persian ideas of religion were introduced to China as early as the third millennium before Christ, appears from the following considerations:

(1) The Chinese Book of Divinations contains in its earliest parts a dual philosophy, that of light and darkness. The whole Persian system of religion was also built on a dual philosophy of light and darkness.

(2) The ancient Persians offered sacrifices on high mountains, and so did the Chinese.

(3) The Persians and the Chinese instead of four elemental powers in Nature, such as the Indians and Greeks had in their philosophy, preferred five, and they were

the same in the Zendavesta as in the Book of History, page 56, of the Chinese, viz. metal, trees, water, fire and earth. These elements were powers moving through Nature, and having special control over the substances named. This was the case among the Chinese and among the Persians.

(4) In the seventh century before Christ human sacrifices were offered in accordance with Persian rites in Honan, occupying the central portion of North China. This was consented to by Chinese princes to conciliate barbarian tribes, who were then residing in North-east China and who followed the Persian religion.

(5) The worship of Hormosda, that is, Ahuramazda or Ormuzd, has continued till the present day in Mongolia and Manchuria, as that of a deity worshipped in co-existence with the worship of fire and with Buddhism.

(6) The future state was an article of the creed of the Chinese in the Han dynasty before Buddhism entered the country and was connected with the worship of the gods of high mountains.

(7) The future state was also an article of belief in Japan and Mongolia at the same time.

(8) Many centuries later, after the completion of the canon of Zoroaster's religion under Shapur II, there was an active propaganda of the Zoroastrian religion in China. The Chinese then gave it the name of the religion of the god of fire. According to the Chinese historians of the time, this Persian religion also prevailed extensively in the kingdoms of which Bokhara and Samarcand were centres of instruction. After the Arabian conquest of Persia in the seventh century great changes took place, but the Persian missions in China did not cease on that account.

Since the Chinese mention Zoroaster as the chief religious teacher of the religion of the god of fire, we must regard him as a real character, and not a myth. He was not a divinity, but a sage. Nor can his period be farther back than late in the second millennium before Christ. His moral convictions were strong, and here his chief power lay. His influence was not felt in China till after the Christian era, and never in Japan. It was paramount in Persia and on the east of the Caspian till the Arabian conquest, that is, through about eighteen centuries. One of the things Zoroaster did was to change cremation of the dead to exposure to vultures. This he did because he was a devoted believer in the Babylonian physical doctrines. He encouraged the worship of the stars, and here he shows again how he was swayed by Babylonian science. He also represented Ahriman as the prince of darkness. He took a view of the universe like that of the Sabeans, but never deserted the monotheistic doctrine. The spirits of the stars and of the sun were angels, not gods, to his consciousness, and that of the Persians who admired his teaching. Darmesteter makes these points clear in the Introduction and Notes to the Zendavesta, but fails to see that Zoroaster was not a divinity, but a national sage. Before Zoroaster taught in Merv and Balkh, cremation was extensively practised, human sacrifices were not uncommon, monotheism was the common faith in Persia, and Ormuzd existed without Ahriman.

After Zoroaster's age, at a time somewhere near seven hundred years before Christ, the worship of Mithras spread to Japan, and that of the sacred fire guarded by the vestal virgins to Rome. The old

Persian doctrines spread farther than did the teaching of Zoroaster himself. Few indeed of his many prohibitions were heeded, except by his countrymen who admired him. It was only very gradually after his time that the Persians ceased to bury their dead in the old way. At the same time the Nestorian Christians and the Manichaeans carried on missions in China, and all three were encouraged by the emperors of the Tang dynasty. Each had a monastery in the capital as headquarters, and branch houses in other cities.

After the Aryan conquest of North India, the ancient Persians consolidated an empire, the tradition of which is preserved in the Jemshed legends. Jemshed's wide empire forms the geographical framework of the Zendavesta, and its establishment would lead to communication in the way of trade between Persia and China. The conditions seem to require that this empire should have been strongly established in the second millennium before Christ. The age of Zoroaster would be some centuries later, when Vishtasp, King of Bactria, was reigning. The seat of Jemshed's empire would be probably on the Oxus, while the scene of Zoroaster's activity would be there also, since Balkh and Merv are specially mentioned. Such geographical circumstances would favour the introduction of the dualistic philosophy into China at an early date. The Persian philosophy was in China probably B.C. 2800, and the system of sacrifices to the powers of Nature would follow it, and was certainly included in the religion of China about B.C. 2200. This was long before the new views of the Parsees originated, and the Persian names of mythological personages now found in the Zendavesta do not appear in Chinese.

They were, we may conclude, not then invented. Philosophy, as so often happens, precedes mythology. Fact precedes fiction. The reflecting sage lays down a logical framework of thought. Afterwards the myth-maker erects his hierarchy of gods on this as a basis.

The Chinese ancestral worship appears at first view to be a national creation. The other Asiatic countries do not seem to have practised it to anything like the same extent as the Chinese. In the sacrifices ancestors of the emperor sit at the banquet with the Supreme Ruler. Tablets were inscribed with their names and set upright on the altar of sacrifice. Particular attention was paid to orientation in the arrangement of the tablets. Ancestors were worshipped not only at the banquet to the Heavenly Ruler but in a special temple. In the arrangement of the worship in this temple the first place was given to the founder of the family. The others were on the right and left; that is, they faced the east and west, while the founder's tablet faced south. The special religious creativeness of the Chinese is seen in their ancestral worship. Their monotheism, accompanied by a system of subordinate divinities without names, they share with the Persians, as they do the worship of the powers of Nature on mountains. In this part of old Chinese worship the Persian creativeness was probably greater than that of China. Ancestral worship was the first addition made by China to the primaeval religion, if it was not brought with them on their first arrival. Yet, on the whole, characteristic as it is of China, ancestral worship is so widely spread in various nations that it must be regarded as one of the very oldest forms of religion the world possesses. In

Chinese historical tradition there was, B.C. 2200, a temple for this worship, that of the emperor Yau. The probability is then that this people, when they reached China, already practised it. It would in this case be a practice introduced in primitive times. Originating in funeral ceremonies, it would be an expression of a natural grief for the departed, and a desire to maintain filial piety after death had removed the honoured and the dear. The revelation of the future state early made would, in the absence of the inspired patriarchs to warn against it, powerfully tend to encourage the worship of the dead.

The human race was destined to spread over the world. Revelation was limited in area. Emigrants, when they passed beyond the reach of inspired patriarchs, would easily forget a part and alter another part of the truths taught them in the first ages. Ancestral worship is then probably older than sun-worship and Sabeanism. Much more is it older than the worship of such divinities as Bel, Nebo, Osiris, Zeus, and Mars.

We have data here which will help us in determining the position of the Persian race in the period between B.C. 3000 and B.C. 2300. The Persians and Hindus would at that time, having left their European home, probably be in what is now Russian Turkestan. This was before the age of Zoroaster and the mythic creations of the Zendavesta. They were in a favourable position for communicating Western ideas to China. The resemblance of the Vedic mythology to that of the Persians compels us to believe that the Hindus and Persians had at one time the same religion. Let us accept the Chinese account of the origin of the dual philosophy, viz. that it was first taught them about B.C. 2800 by Fu hi, an

ancient emperor of the Chinese race, and also bear in mind that it was, as it was then taught, philosophy without mythology; then we may conclude that the Persian and Hindu mythology, as found in the Vedas and Zend-avesta, was elaborated not earlier than the second millennium before Christ. Mythology is a morbid growth from philosophy, and polytheism is a mistaken understanding of natural phenomena. The primaeval monotheism is the original source from which polytheism was, on account of the localizing and individualizing habit into which man is prone to fall, gradually excogitated.

This was what took place in primaeval Persia, in which was embraced what is now Turkestan, east of the Caspian. Jemshed himself became the Hindu god Yama. Mithras is, I believe, the Hebrew and Semitic word for the sun, Shemesh. The worship of Mithras and Vesta in Rome were really both of Persian origin. In Japan Amaterasu is the sun goddess, and this name is in fact, as I suppose, Mithras written in Japanese, though the Japanese themselves are not aware of this etymology, and believe that this name is explained satisfactorily as formed from *ama*, 'heaven,' and *terasu*, 'to shine.' Mithras is also found in China as a name for Sunday in almanacs. The single character *mit* is used, and the practice of introducing the word *mit*, 'secret,' before each Sunday commenced probably in the Tang dynasty, A.D. 900, when Persian astronomers were in office at the Chinese court, and made what is called in Chinese the *Hwei hwei li*, or Mohammedan calendar for Chinese imperial use. Few Chinese are aware that this word *mit* is Mithras, yet there is no doubt of the fact.

The ideas of the Persians would spread because of the

activity of the magi, whose pretensions to magic and actual skill in Babylonian science ensured them a welcome in new regions, and enabled them to travel everywhere with ease. Hence Mithras was worshipped in Rome, in India, and in distant Japan, and the ancient Germans took over, in the days of the week, not only the sun as a god to be adored, but the moon and the five elemental powers. The gods recognized in our days of the week are in fact the five elements, five colours, five planets, or five national deities which, when Chaldean science was allied to German legend, were chosen to be embraced in the cycle of the seven names of days which we still use in our modern life, Monday, Tuesday, and the others. Science comes before mythology, and is so mixed with it, that the permanence and spread of the mythological conception is proportionately increased.

The religious spirit of the Persians was opposed to polytheism, because they were believers in direct revelation from Ormuzd to Zoroaster, their revered sage. In proportion as they regarded Ormuzd as real, personal, almighty, and all merciful, they were unwilling to become polytheists. The resemblance between the idea of revelation in the Bible, in the Zendavesta, and in the She king of China, is most striking. In all these three books God speaks in words to the chosen prophet of a nation. There is also no slight resemblance in the laws of fasting and purification. The religious idea is, so far as faith in monotheism and in the character of the religious observances are concerned, strikingly similar. The precedence of monotheism and the later introduction of ancestral worship seem to be fair deductions from the facts. It is a noteworthy circumstance that no

Ahriman was known in the early Chinese religion. The prince of darkness first appears as the Buddhist Mara or *Mo-kwei*, imported from India in later times. Satan, as a name, is not mentioned in the Pentateuch, and the Jews were not perhaps familiar with this name till they possessed it in the Books of Samuel and Job. These facts, if placed together, tend to show that the addition of Ahriman to the Persian creed was late, comparatively. The dual philosophy led gradually to the adoption of the name Ahriman as a creator of the evil and darkness of the universe.

The age of Zoroaster and the Zendavesta was long subsequent to the propagation of the dual philosophy in Persia. That philosophy was based on physical facts and observations made on Nature, and it slid gradually into a modified polytheism or star-worship, such as we find both in Persia and China.

Here may very suitably be added a few words on the belief in immediate revelation made by God to eminent persons. Modern Chinese commentators do not allow this, but the poets of the *Book of Odes* beyond doubt represent verbal revelation as being made by God to Wen wang: 'Be not like those who reject this and cling to that. Be not like those who are ruled by their fancies and desires; I notice favourably your intelligent virtue. You act in accord with God's law. Take measures against the land of your enemy, and with your brothers prepare scaling-ladders to attack the walls of Tsung[1].'

These expressions may be compared with some dreams of the sovereign of the Tsin kingdom, which are found in the Shï chi and also in the Feng su Tung of Ying shau. Mu kung was in a trance for seven days. He then woke

[1] *Chinese Classics*, by Legge, vol. iv. pp. 452, 454.

and said to Kung sun Chï and Tsï yü, 'God is very pleased with me. The reason why I slept so long is that I might be instructed. God told me respecting the Tsin kingdom (Shansi) that it will be in a state of anarchy for five generations. After this the sovereign will become chief in power of all the states, and will die before he is an old man. His son will cause in his kingdom confusion in the social relation of the sexes.' Kung sun Chï wrote this prediction down and kept it. It was supposed to be fulfilled, and such predictions became current in that age, and it was believed that the souls of eminent persons might wander in the regions of the higher heaven among divine beings. It was in North-western China, about B.C. 600, that predictions regarding kings and monarchs are said to have been especially uttered. The word *ti* in these accounts is used monotheistically in each instance, as it is also always in the passages in the *Book of Odes*, where God is said to have made revelations in express words to Wen wang.

In the history of primitive monotheism and of early revelation, it is most important to take note of these things. They show how, beyond the Semitic area, the same class of religious ideas is found as within that area. In Asia in early times, before the introduction of image-worship and polytheistic teaching, this sort of faith in one personal God, who reveals Himself to man with or without dreams, was far more widely spread than afterwards.

The sense of right and wrong is intuitive in the monotheistic nations. Monotheism favours the recognition of intuitional morality. If any race is monotheistic, that race will maintain a comparatively high standard of duty. Persia could not be satisfied without a judgment

to come. Believing in Ormuzd, the doctrine of Ahriman though dualistic, never led to the denial of the supremacy of Ormuzd.

The earliest records then unite in giving us the evidence that in Persia and China, as well as among the Hebrews, there was faith in one God revealing Himself to man by personal revelations.

The belief in direct revelations made to man by divine persons has survived in China to the present day. For many centuries, probably as far back as to the fourth century, it has been the fashion to attribute all new Tauist books to revelation. Lautsï or Kwan yin, or some famous Tauist, is supposed to reveal them. A house is selected. Two men of Tauist repute undertake the arrangements. A table is sanded. Above it hangs a large writing pencil. Prayers are recited, and soon the Divine Being descends on a phoenix. The pencil moves. It is suspended by a string to a beam, and is partly held over the sand by the operator. As the pencil moves, characters are found to be written on the sanded table. They are deciphered by the operator, and constitute an oracle. Tauist books are originated in this way. The operator is himself the writer. He holds the pencil, and in fact writes the characters; but the belief is that the god himself writes them through the operator, who is possessed by the god.

This is, in fact, a sort of modern magianism. It resembles the heathen oracles of Greece, and it is accounted for by the spread of that class of ideas among the Chinese which are in part Hindu, in part Persian, and in part the result of Shamanism. It is what early revelation in Asia has come to be in modern times under modern conditions of society.

CHAPTER III

THE PHILOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THE NAMES FOR GOD

IN Cheyne's remarks on Persian monotheism, in his Bampton Lectures on the Psalter, p. 282, he speaks of the Persian idea of God as most spiritual and monotheistic in the Gathas. Dualism appears in the Vendidad, and polytheism in the rest of the Avesta. Now Chinese facts show that monotheism certainly preceded polytheism. The early physical philosophy of the Yi king is destitute of polytheism, and this was of Persian origin. We may, therefore, from the Chinese side decide in favour of the comparative spirituality of the early conception of Ahuramazda, as Cheyne does. Spiegel, who has done so much to throw light on the religion of the ancient Persians, believes that the Jewish conception of Jahveh has modified and purified the Persian view. But in fact Ahriman, being later than Ormuzd by some centuries, the Persians had themselves a purer and more spiritual conception of God in a philosophical age anterior to the era of Zoroaster. The age of corruption would be after the reign of Jemshid, when this monarch became Yama, god of the dead. Spiegel also contends that in the principal points the Iranian ideas came forth of themselves by natural evolution from the ancient Aryan ideas. Granted that

this was the case, they did not stand alone. The influence of Babylonian civilization was still paramount. That civilization embraced advance in science, in philosophy, and in religious ideas. It was from this great centre of influence that the Aryans derived the more pure and correct of their ideas. Among all the more enlightened Aryan nations, there existed comparatively pure and elevated thoughts of God, struggling to maintain a footing amidst the growing polytheism. Just at this point the Chinese witnesses appear. We learn from them that it is needless to suppose that the early monotheism of the world had any other origin than in the early revelations communicated by inspired men. We are not at liberty to derive it from polytheism, because the Chinese, Persian, Semitic, and Aryan evidence are against this mode of accounting for monotheistic belief.

Thus in the Pentateuch, in harmony with this view, the teaching of the names of God is given before the consolidation of the national life of the Israelites. To trace the religion of the Israelites to polytheism is an error. It was originally monotheistic, and the Pentateuch ought to retain undisturbed its place at the head of the Hebrew sacred books. The antiquity of the Pentateuch is vouched for by its monotheistic teaching. The facts of Chinese history and religious development show that Persia before Zoroaster had a long age when a monotheistic religion and incipient dualistic philosophy prevailed in that country. This philosophy was physical and grew out of the physical science of Babylon at a time when Babylonian tritheism had not yet been developed. Philosophical views on religion in Palestine, of Babylonian origin, prevailed before the age of Moses. Slow as was the progress of Babylonian

science, its growth spread over an immensely long period. For example, the stars were named by the Chinese 2,300 years before Christ, and the stars correspond for the most part to those of the *nakshatras* of India and Arabia. The Chinese had at that time adopted a calendar of Babylonian origin, based on the nineteen year cycle of the moon. By means of cuneiform writing Babylonian knowledge was spread in Palestine in the days of Abraham. This enables us to account from the literary standpoint for the remarkably clear teaching of monotheism in the Pentateuch. We must hold firmly to the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch as a whole, because then it is in its proper chronological position. There were early revelations made in Babylonia of a monotheistic character. They were accompanied by science and philosophy, and were with this aid able to spread widely. The age of Moses was the second great age of divine revelation, and the age of the prophets was the third.

The great importance of the first age of primaeval revelation will be plainly seen, if the growth of the national names for God be made the subject of careful examination. Through the effect of early revelation the conception of a God is universal among men, except when by vice, isolation, and bad teaching the idea becomes obscured. God being universally known, He can be named differently by this and that race, but He is the same to all men. He is one being. The word God, then, ought to be formed in one language from what it is in another by a slow process of change. For example *Iddio* in Italian grew slowly out of the Latin *Deus*. In China *ti* means 'ruler,' 'emperor,' as well as God. God is conceived by the Chinese as a sovereign.

But this was not the first thought they had of God. By the forefathers of the Teutons He was conceived of as the supremely good being. This etymology of our word God is, however, questioned by philologists. Again *Deus* is 'the bright one' among the Celts, the Latins, Greeks, and Hindus. But we need not on this account deny the identity of the word. *Deus* as 'the bright one' is not among Aryans the only idea possible of God. He may be also, as in Semitic, 'the mighty one.' We call Him the Almighty. The French call Him the Eternal.

What I contend for is that God was one, and the name one, to a larger extent than has been supposed. The Chinese word *Ti* may be *Deus*, Θεος, *Dewa*, *Din*, and also *Elohim*. In order to render this possible there must have been an ancient value, something like *dut*, to form a basis for the names. The universality of the idea of God in ancient times shows that the idea was as common as it was ancient, and as ancient as it was common. We ought therefore to expect to find it by gentle variations and modifications assuming a form suitable to each language in sound and in sense. It does not follow that because God in Chinese is the 'sovereign ruler' it may not be 'the bright one' in another language. Nor is it necessary that because *Deus* is 'the bright one' in Latin, and *Ti* in Chinese is 'the sovereign ruler,' that these may not be one word. The Chinese mind thought sovereignty was the most important idea to be remembered and inculcated in the attributes of God. The Chinese have political ideas strongly developed. The social and the moral is to them important. The idea of God is therefore to them very naturally the ruler. To the Aryans brightness was the chief idea, and if *Deus*, *diu*, Θεος, *deva* be traced to their

origin etymologically, this idea suits. But in Hebrew *eloat* or *elot* or *edut*, as I believe it was originally pronounced, means 'the powerful one,' because it was a Semitic preference to regard the might of God as the most conspicuous divine attribute. The word may be the same in the three systems of language. We seek an international etymology, such as shall embrace the three ideas of brightness, sovereignty and power, a word that may be suitable to express the early conception of God formed by young humanity in prehistoric times.

Let us imagine an age when the Chinese, the Semites, and the Aryans were still one family. Some patriarchal figure before their separation is instructing a group in religion. Will brightness be the only idea by which he will teach God, or sovereignty, or power, or fatherhood, or goodness? He would point to the sky. He would appeal to the thunder, to the rain, and to the roaring blast. He would dilate on fatherhood, on sovereignty, on the brightness of the dawn and of the sun. These would all form a part of the primaeval rhetoric; but the first germ of the name of God, as it seems to me, would be in the direction pointed to, in the act of pointing, in the hand used in the gesture, and in the demonstrative already in use. The gesture used in pointing upward would originate the root. To judge by the form of *Elohim*, *Deus*, and *Ti*, the original word would then be something like *dut*. With such a root of demonstrative origin, the teaching of the divine attributes would be combined gradually, as instruction proceeded from age to age. The imaginative Indo-Europeans made much of the dawn and of the sun. But the real origin of the word would be earlier. The Indo-Europeans are a mixed

race. The short and broad-headed portion are probably the older, and the long-headed the more recent, because the eastern Asiatic races are predominantly short and broad-headed. Hence we must expect to meet with Aryan words, and in fact nearly the whole Indo-European vocabulary is found in the eastern Asiatic vocabulary.

Certainly the demonstrative or pronominal origin of this very widely-used name for God is in accord with the subjective character of the idea of God. It is more subjective than objective, and therefore the name would not unnaturally be pronominal. Then came the other names, *Shaddai*, 'the powerful,' *Jehovah*, 'the self-existing,' *Bhagavan*, *Bogd*, 'the happy,' *Gott*, 'the good,' *Elyon*, 'the most high,' *Adonai*, 'lord.' *Khoda*, the Persian word, means 'master.' These came from reflection, and would all be parallel with the pronominal word which I suppose the Chinese, the Semites, and the Aryans have all agreed to use. The Teutons let it go, and kept the term God. So too a special word was kept by the Persians and by the Slavs. In Persia, however, before *Khoda* came into use, *Ormuzd* was the favourite term, and this word is compounded in part of *Asura*, which is derived from *asus*, 'master,' the *Hera* of the goddess Juno, and the German *Herr*. The other part of *Ormuzd* is *mazdao*, 'great knowledge.' Thus *Khoda* comes into Persian as a substitute for the 'greatly wise lord.' Among Teutons and Slavs, the names God and *Bogd* became strong enough by national preference to push out the older word and secure adoption in its stead. The subjective word of pronominal origin took the earliest place, as being the outflow of the subjective

religious consciousness of humanity. It needed to be originated in this way. Poetical imagination could not, without this subjective basis, succeed in expressing suitably so grand and universally impressive an idea as that of God.

A most important point in the view here given is the identity of *Allah* with *Deus* through an earlier change from *Addat.* Every Semitic ה *He* is in fact *d*, *t*, or *s*. By physiological change *l* proceeds from *d*, when the sides of the tongue are dropped in pronouncing *d*[1].

Neither *l* nor *r* can be primaeval letters. When investigating the name of God in primaeval speech, we must change all new letters, such as *l* and *r*, to those from which they have been evolved.

The patriarchal teacher of primaeval ages would, according to this derivation of the name for God used by the Chinese and other ancient nations, employ the demonstrative, seconding it by pointing to heaven with the hand, and by descriptions of God's power and glory, and he would so convey a conception of God to the minds of his auditors that the pronoun would become the name. This origin for words would always succeed when the subjective impression of any idea was more vigorous than the objective.

I would ask of investigators to consider carefully this mode of deriving that one name for God which is used by a large majority of the whole human race, and which helps to substantiate the fact that the common consciousness of mankind speaks to every one instinctively of the existence of God. Brightness alone has not in it sufficient basis for the great and awful name of Deity.

[1] Sweet's *Handbook of Phonetics* may be consulted.

The idea of brightness is but an added feature in the description of the Divine being. It would not be by this attribute that God would first become known to mankind. We must go back to the mother speech, from which Chinese, Tartar, Semite, and Aryan were all developed. There we ought to find the great idea of God already conceived in language.

The mythologies are various. The idea of God is one. When mythology was made the race imagination of each language was active. The creative activity of races is seen in the grammatical forms preferred by each, and here the demonstratives are widely used, and other forms are built on them as a basis. Then comes mythological creativeness, with political, social, commercial, and legal creativeness.

It is possible to define and trace many of the ideas embraced in civilized vocabularies, and they may be reduced to form as branches from a root. Words were adopted as the mind of man grew. Knowledge called for new words. They were not therefore all contemporary. In most cases the formation of words was gradual. What are called roots in Indo-European languages are in fact words belonging to the vocabulary of the races by the union of which the Indo-European grammar and vocabulary were formed. No other theory will stand, for the Indo-European languages are built up on previously existing systems of language.

Some men of the first race from which other races sprang would be distinguished for their moral and spiritual excellence. Their influence would be great because of the divine aid they received and the purity of their lives. Such was Enoch, in an age when evil

began to reign among men. The origination and preservation of the name for God, first used, would be in the hands of such men, because they would be the teachers of religion. The idea of the family would through their influence become extended and be transformed into that of the nation. The extension of religion would be in the hands of these men, and the religious terms they used would be adopted by their audiences.

NOTE.—In Hebrew words, and in Semitic words generally, *h* stands for *t* or *s*. The letter ה *He* corresponds to the Greek aspirate, which also represents *s*, as in ἥλιος, *sol*, the sun. In Sanscrit and Zend the same thing happens. The Indian *Soma* is the Zend *Haoma*, for example. In Hebrew the connexion of He with Heth is very rare and exceptional. Hence אֱלֹהִים *elohim* is really *edotim*, if we restore the old sounds. Behemoth in Job is *betemoth*, the Latin *bestia* with a third radical *m* added. *Bohu* is the Greek abyss, because *h* in both languages represents *s*. Probably there are a hundred important words which by the application of this simple rule can be at once added to the list of those Semitic nouns and verbs which are the same with Indo-European words resembling them in sense and sound.

CHAPTER IV

HOW RELIGIOUS IDEAS SPREAD IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

WHEN the intercourse of nations is perfected, as in the modern age, by quick travelling, all great ideas spread rapidly. In the old times, religious and other thoughts spread very slowly, because of the lack of education and the inadequacy of the means of conveyance. In the times not long before Abraham, the transplanting of important thoughts, religious and moral, had already become facilitated by the spread of civilization. Babylonia was even then a centre of great thoughts, a part of which Abraham brought with him to Palestine. The art of writing had been known for many centuries. The habit grew up of employing scribes to communicate thought. Letters, edicts, genealogical tables, religious hymns, brief statements of historical events, came into use. Among them were some documents of great interest on religious subjects.

The Babylonian account of the creation spread to Palestine, as is shown, for example, by the similarity of the Phœnician ideas of the origin of the world to those of the Mesopotamian plain. Religious ideas spread gradually in time and in space. They grow by degrees

and become modified by circumstances. When migration of races is attended by civilizing agencies, religious ideas spread more rapidly than otherwise. Consequently those ideas of this nature, which originated in Babylonia, have been communicated much more widely than others.

The primaeval religious usages, such as sacrifice, for example, spread farther and more rapidly than the modern criticism of some writers supposes was the case. In China, sacrifices take the form of burnt offerings, and of offerings of respect. In the *Li ki*, the fifth of the Chinese classics, the burnt sacrifice and the other sacrifices are offered on separate altars. The reason of a burnt sacrifice is not stated. The Chinese suggest that it is in order to convey the fragrant odour of the burning victim up to God in heaven. In the narrative given in Genesis, we note that the burnt offering was more acceptable than the fruits of the earth. The confession of sin made it so. Starting from the Scripture account, we are to regard sacrifices as a divine institution. In China the missionary is able to state this as an explanation of the burnt sacrifices which in the Chinese classics are offered to heaven.

In proportion to the advance of civilization of any race would be the extent and accuracy of religious tradition. The Chinese when they arrived in their country brought with them the custom of offering burnt sacrifices. Less civilized races, so far as we know, had not done so. Not only did the Chinese sovereign offer burnt sacrifices to heaven; the common people also offered burnt sacrifices at marriages. This is stated in the classical work known as the *Yi li*[1]. The god of the

[1] There is a French translation of this work by Prof. Harlez.

south-west corner was thus honoured, and the kitchen god at the south-east corner. Both sacrifices were offered outside of the house. Nothing of this is observed by the Chinese now, but it was their practice in the olden time. The bride and bridegroom knelt towards the tablets of these two divinities as a part of the marriage ceremony.

This connexion of fire-worship with marriage is an instance of Persian influence. The kitchen god is the god of fire, for the worship of the elements was early practised by the Persians. This custom, it is likely, was not introduced into China earlier than about 1000 B.C. It was probably discontinued as an outdoor sacrifice as far back as the Christian era; but the worship of the fire god has been retained till the present day. The bride and bridegroom kneel to the fire god in the kitchen.

The Flood does not appear to have been known in China in the early ages, for what is called the Chinese Flood is a local catastrophe. The name Nü wa, supposed to be Noah, is met with not earlier than the age of Confucius, and came in with other traditions. So it was in India. The tradition of the Flood of Noah undoubtedly went to India, but it was after the Vedic age. It went to that country with the belief in a future life, astronomy, a trinity of gods, and other dogmas believed in Mesopotamia. I should say, therefore, that we cannot regard the Deluge traditions, either of India or of China, as having gone to those countries before the age of the Classics or Vedas. They were introduced subsequently, in the time of the Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian empires, which favoured the spread of all sorts of ideas.

Let the limited deluge of Sir William Dawson be accepted. Egypt and Western Asia were sunk under the sea, and again rose from it after a brief interval. Before and after this great catastrophe, recorded in all the literatures of that part of the world as an ancient tradition, there was a distribution of races caused by emigration. The world was peopled twice; once after Adam, and a second time after Noah. Religious traditions were of two kinds in China and other countries beyond the deluged regions. The traditions of the Chinese classics were to a large extent antediluvian. The traditions of Tauist and Buddhist books are post-diluvian. The burnt sacrifices of the classics, with the beginnings of philosophy and of astronomical science in the same ancient books, are antediluvian. Polytheism, astrology and the belief in charms are post-diluvian.

The great importation of polytheistic belief and superstitious use of charms and of astrological predictions into China in the first millennium before Christ shows what religious thought had become in Babylon. There was at that time pictorial art to aid. Pictures and statues were both employed to propagate the current religious ideas, but not till shortly before the Christian era. The Chinese learned to worship Venus under the title, 'the mother of the western king.' Jupiter was the eastern king, and in worshipping him adoration was offered to the element of wood, reigning in the spring of the year. The imperial astronomers took advantage of the position of the planet Jupiter in his orbit of twelve years to settle the astrological destiny of each of the Chinese provinces, judged by the stars under which it lay.

Let the difference between the early and late importa-

tion of religious ideas be carefully noted. The worship of the Supreme Ruler with burnt sacrifices belongs to the one. A corrupt polytheism and superstition founded on science marks the other. The first has in it divine elements. The second is purely human. The one is comparatively pure. The other is altogether corrupt. It may be concluded then that divine revelation was still present in the early period in those regions from which the primitive Chinese traditions came, while later on in time polytheism had been extremely active, and an idolatrous spirit was paramount.

It is noteworthy, moreover, that not only in China do we find comparative purity of religious belief anterior to the entrance of polytheism ; the same is true of India. In the Vedas there was no caste, no image of a divinity, no metempsychosis, no flaunting before the public eye of revolting ceremonies. As years rolled on, the nature divinities of the Vedas became trinitarian gods, and subtle metaphysics took the place of a much simpler philosophy. Yama came in to judge the under-world. Then came throughout India a thorough change. Monotheism first passed into a personification of the powers of Nature, and these became again so modified that Brahma, Vishna, and Siva came to be recognized as the chief gods in the national pantheon. In this change there is the introduction of the idea of creation and its correlate destruction. In Indra comes forward the conception of actual government of the world. In Maha Ishwara we have self-existence and sovereignty. The sun and the moon are both gods to be worshipped. Previous to Buddhism the Indian mind was greatly stirred to thought on divine things. The thinker, usually a Brahmin of that country,

strove to make advance in the conception of God. His ancestors had, when they conquered India, so far abandoned the original monotheism as to personify Nature, and adopt the names Varuna, Mitra, Indra, and others. The Greeks and Persians honoured the same gods in part, as the names show. The Hindus proceeded from the Vedic mythology to that which we find in the Buddhist books, swaying the popular mind of India in the age when Buddha taught.

There was a time of Persian influence, when Yama was appointed god of the dead. He was a real Persian king who became a god of the dead, because in the absence of divine revelation men would have it so. What then shall we say of such a word as Varuna, the Greek *οὐρανός*, and Urania? It seems to say the Indians came from Europe. By the Persian Mithras we learn further that the Aryan conquerors of India reached it by the lands lying to the east of the Caspian Sea. But behind all this is primaeval monotheism and that actual Nature which, when reflected on without revelation's aid, became the basis of various forms of polytheism. This forces us back to a time earlier than the origin of the Indo-European language and religion, to a still more ancient residence in Western Asia. The Indo-European people had a purer form of religious thought when in their original home. They became Greeks in Greece, Lithuanians in Eastern Russia near the Baltic, and Hindus in India. The forces and aspects of Nature in each country suggested polytheistic belief in a form suited apparently to each country.

We need to reduce the early religious faith of all the races to a certain harmony. In doing this we ought to

insist on realism as against myth at every point all down the stream of time. Why should we necessarily have mythological periods in history? What we need to do is not to cease our search, when we find ancient men and women described as half human and half animal, but rather view them as real men and women covered up from view in a mythical cloud. History, even if forgotten, is real from the earliest ages, and we are apt to forget this, and to be content with viewing it as mythological. Let us rather strip off the shell that hides the kernel from being seen. For example, Ishtar is really Venus, and originates in the evening star. The Babylonian astronomy is older than the myth of Ishtar and of Venus. It is true, while the mythology joined to it is false. Divine teaching belongs to the kernel, and not to the shell. The words, 'Let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and for years,' are a divine utterance, a record of what was revealed in the days of the primaeval revelation. It is astronomical teaching, it is not mythological. We have to sweep away the mythological element, and the kernel remains. That kernel is worth seeking. It is something true, and therefore valuable: a resting-place for thought. Ancient men never saw the goddess Aphrodite, not Homer himself. They only saw the star, and they invented the whole story about the goddess. So with Mercury, the winged messenger of the gods, called also Hermes, the interpreter of the gods. What is this divinity? He is Nebo certainly, and what is Nebo? Nebo is the planet Mercury, just as Baal is the sun. The sun is older than the mythology that wrapped up the sun from view, and the mythology disappears quickly, like the richly coloured

clouds of evening when the night comes on. The worship of Baal is in the Old Testament the worship of the sun, while Nebo is simply the planet Mercury, with additions of a mythological kind. Yet our text-books on mythology shrink from stating its Babylonian origin.

The account given by Cox in his work on Aryan mythology tends to convey the impression that the Aryan race had the field all to themselves, and produced all their gods by their own inventiveness. The fact is, that the Aryan and Semitic, as well as the Egyptian mythology, are founded on Babylonian observations of the heavens. First there was *monotheism* and *moral law*, Then came the worship of heaven, the sun, the moon, and the planets. After this the mythologies sprang up among the Accadians at Babylon, the Assyrians, the Egyptians, and the Greeks. Image-worship began to be practised at the same time. Then it was that the nations of the Aryan race worked out their mythology in an age which was partly before the conquest of Persia and India by the Aryan nation, and partly after that eventful struggle. The difference between one god and another is very much the difference between one planet and another. If we embrace in one view the sun, moon, and stars, with the wind and rain, the seasons and the phenomena of earthquakes and volcanoes, we have the naturalistic basis out of which the mythologies grew.

The myth arises after the reality which it misrepresents, and it is remarkable that in the first chapters of Genesis, both in the narratives of the writers who used Elohim and El and of the writers who used Jehovah, there is no polytheistic element. The documents in their original form must be extremely ancient. They

seem to be older than the tablets of the creation poem translated by Fox-Talbot in the *Records of the Past.* There the name Bel is used, indicating that these tablets were recent. Since monotheism preceded polytheism, the Hebrew account is the older. It was translated from an older cuneiform account, which may be unearthed at some future time. This seems more likely than that the Hebrew translators substituted Elohim and Jehovah for Bel.

The power to spread far and last for ages attaching to Babylonian knowledge was due to science. On the east the Persians gladly accepted it, as is quite plainly seen in their adoration of the five elemental or planetary gods. They and the Sabeans both adored the heavenly host because Babylon lay between them.

The thought may occur that since the Accadians and the Semites in Babylon had a trinitarian polytheism very early, and also worshipped personified planets, the Hebrew account of creation must have been a translation from tablets in cuneiform having Bel for God. But it should be considered that in a country a thousand miles or more from Mesopotamia it would be very ancient accounts that would be current. Babylonian astrology sprang up in China many centuries after it was current at Babylon. In ancient Asia many ages passed before waves of thought, starting from the centre of civilization, reached the outer circle at which they were destined to arrive. New waves of thought followed the old at intervals, but they did not obliterate the traces of those that left the centre at an earlier period. The accounts of the creation with Elohim and with Jehovah Elohim may then very well be older than the accounts with Bel.

A question of supreme importance now occurs, When did the idea of a Trinity in the divine nature first arise? There are pre-intimations of the Trinity in the Pentateuch. This book must not be lightly ascribed to a post-Davidic age. And there will, if we continue to regard it as belonging to the Mosaic period, be good reason to make careful search in it on the subject of a Trinity in the divine nature. The almost entire absence of proper names formed with the word Jehovah obliges us to place the composition of the Pentateuch in the centuries preceding the age of Samuel. Joshua and Jochebed are the only two names of persons so formed. The practice began in the family of Moses. Besides, there are in the Pentateuch records of the commencement of the use of the divine names employed by the Hebrews. Subsequently to the Mosaic age the prophets taught the doctrine of God, but introduced no new name for God. The Pentateuch then, as its archaisms also show, belongs to the time before Samuel. If it were to be referred to the age of Hosea, why should the words *tsum*, 'fast,' and *hekal*, 'temple,' be omitted[1]? We must be allowed to retain the Pentateuch in the age assigned it by the Jews and the early Christians. Otherwise we cannot account for the accuracy of the details regarding ancient Egypt that we find in it. It consists of manuscripts of various writers selected by Moses, or written under the eye of Moses, or composed after his death by writers who shared his spirit and enjoyed Divine aid.

[1] After the exile quite a new word for genealogical registers was introduced, Neh. vii. 64, הַמִּתְיַחְשִׂים, hammithyaḥsim. The word in the Pentateuch is תּוֹלְדֹת, toledoth. *Hekal* is used in Samuel for the Tabernacle, but not earlier.

The word Elohim itself, as used in the Pentateuch, conveys an intimation of a plurality in the divine nature. A plural noun in the nominative was used with its verb in the singular. The creation of man in Genesis is preceded by the statement, 'Let us make man in our image,' using the plural, and then the grammatical form returns again to the singular. The Hebrew Elohim is, without doubt, the plural of majesty, and is parallel to the holy of holies, the heaven of heavens, the rock of ages, the Lord of hosts. It is an elevated Hebraism. But it is more than a philological expression. It harmonizes, as implying a plurality of divine persons, with the trinitarianism of the Babylonians. We find traces of the same theological conception of God in the narrative of the angels who conversed with Abraham before the destruction of the cities of the plain, one of whom is called Jehovah. We also find it in the terms used in later portions of the Pentateuch, when the writer is speaking of the angel of the covenant, who also is called Jehovah. This conception of God existed previously in Babylonian teaching. It belongs to the lost revelation long ago made in the plains of Babylonia. The Babylonians were the first to look on God in the light of a Trinity. In this they were followed by the Egyptians. Professor Hommel of Munich, in his work on *The Babylonian Origin of Egyptian Culture*, has shown that the oldest Trinity of the Egyptians is derived from the oldest Trinity of the Babylonians. Both these Trinities, however, belong to an age of reflection and of matured thinking. They would be preceded by monotheistic faith, while polytheism is later than either.

The Hebrew documents which employ Elohim and

Jehovah Elohim respectively as names for God, must be viewed as translated from older documents, which possibly spoke of God in the plural, as in Dan. iii. 25 'son of Elohim,' rendered 'son of the gods' in the Revised Version. Elohim is used then in the plural not only for majesty, like *hashamayim*, Chaldee, *Shamaya*, 'the heavens,' and other Hebrew and Chaldee words, but because God was thought of as really embracing a plurality. Egypt was very old even in the days of Moses, and the oldest plurality of gods is, of course, anterior to the Book of the Dead, which has in it Isis, and Osiris, and other later divinities. The Genesis documents then of the creation, the fall, and the deluge are representative of a very ancient belief in a certain plurality in God; and in the vocabulary of the Hebrew people we find proof that this race in speaking of God prefers a plural form. In the common talk of the nation the idea of plurality in God seems to be implied. Thus the language became elevated in tone. But if so, then, previous to the polytheism of Bel, Nebo, and Merodach, it is possible that there was a divine element in the trinitarianism of the Babylonians. On this divine basis human wisdom built up a structure of its own. We read 'The Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters.' This is the inspired statement in the Hebrew. So is the phrase, 'The earth was without form and void.' This is both Babylonian and Hebrew language. It is the language of the most ancient Jewish belief, and it is also ancient Babylonian belief, and was of divine origin in both. The Hebrew account of the creation was transferred from Babylonia to Palestine. Hence we must conclude that those portions of the Babylonian

belief respecting God which agree with the creed of Jews and Christians are the result of early divine revelation. This justifies us in our expositions of Scripture in stating that the expression, 'Let us make man in our image,' implies something like a trinitarian distinction of persons in God. It was on this account that the idea of triple distinction in the divine nature appears in India after the Vedas, and in Chinese Tauism, as also in Plato and in old Egyptian ideas. It is found in four countries, all possessing important ancient literatures; and we must recognize a divine element in the trinitarianism which marks the philosophical statements regarding the divine nature and the mode of the divine existence found in Greece, Egypt, India, and China. Plato does not profess to have originated his theosophy entirely himself. He expanded what he gathered from the Ionic philosophers, from Egypt, from Babylon, and from Pythagoras.

Philosophy did not begin with the Greeks. There were philosophers before them in Western Asia and in Egypt. As to the Babylonian origin of Egyptian theology, no one opposes the opinion of Hommel, stated publicly at the Congress of Orientalists in September, 1892. For the present we may take this view as accepted until opposing opinions have been elicited. The New Testament regards Adam, Abel, Enoch, and Noah as having received divine revelations, and these revelations, so far as we can at present see, would be made to them on Mesopotamian ground. The language in which those revelations were given would be the primaeval language used by our first ancestors. The time would be before the separation from the most ancient stock of

language of the Chinese, the Tartar, the Semitic, and the Indo-European systems. Further, it may be said that, whenever revelation has been made, it has always been monotheistic in doctrine; and here is suggested a curious parallel between religion and language, curious and yet most true, that as monotheism preceded polytheism, through the perversity of the human mind, so monosyllabism was developed into polysyllabism. This parallel may be carried yet another step forward. The migration of nations favoured polytheism. In language, nomadism is fatal to local accent and local gesture. As a substitute for these, syllables were added to words, to facilitate their being understood. Polysyllabism thus became inevitable in new languages. Wherever monosyllabism lingers, it is to be viewed as an heirloom of primaeval times and a characteristic of primaeval types.

We find traces of the primitive trinitarianism in India. To my own mind there remains no doubt that the distinction between Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva was made by the Hindus under Mesopotamian influence. Heathen trinitarianism fell readily into tritheism. The Trinity of persons in God was properly interpreted only by Jewish and Christian theologians. Whatever in the theosophic reflections of the Hindu thinker has been found to be grand, inspiring, and consolatory, I should be inclined to ascribe ultimately to the inflow at some distant period of divine thought, the gift of primaeval revelation. Divine revelation gave to Babylonia the impulse to science and to civilization, because it ennobled and purified human faculties, elevated human thought, and drew the human eye upward to that Eternal God who is not far from every one of us.

These purifying and elevating thoughts went with each pilgrim or caravan which proceeded by sea or land to whatever home. It might affect a nation in its original state, or it might arrive later, and produce upon the life of a people the most striking effects.

The Karen traditions in Burma are of the most remarkable kind. They belong to a later period than the creation and deluge traditions of India, and closely resemble in many points the accounts found in the first chapters of the Old Testament. They would be conveyed to the Karens by sea at some unknown period. The Karens were prepared to a large extent by these traditions to receive Christianity when brought to them by missionaries in modern times. If we take the example of the Celtic stories of enchanted castles and magical power, we find they are on the whole capable of being traced in some of their features to the Mohammedans, whose civilization was Babylonian and Greek, and reached its acme of splendour a century or two centuries after Mahomet. Magic and enchantment originated earlier, and, like the cabbala, must be traced to the source of all the higher forms of superstition in the Mesopotamian plain. The Tauists of China have similar stories of magic. *The Mabinogion* of the Welsh, the *Seven Champions of Christendom*, the *Arabian Nights*, and the magical stories of the Tauists really unite in certain features common to them all. The central thought in all is the magician's power over Nature. He can raise storms at his will, and utter charms of startling efficacy. In what did this originate?

At the beginning of history there were teachers who received divine revelations. The names of some of them

in the earliest ages we know, but there was a race of imitators who sprang up into notoriety in primitive society and worked evil. The bad imitated the good. Charms to control Nature were an imitation of the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man. False religion derives much of its influence over mankind from its being a slavish copy of the true. The Mohammedans in various countries are many of them firmly convinced of the truth and importance of their religious belief, and among them are men not a few who to all outward appearance are men of piety. This shows that divine revelation came down to their forefathers in some form, and so they were taught some soul-inspiring truths in the first place. We know, for example, that Mahomet himself learned very much from the Bible. If he taught his disciples without and beyond the Bible, he taught them in some things erroneously, as when he instructed them to slay infidels and propagate their religion by the sword. In the first ages men with characters like Job and Melchisedec would in certain parts of Mesopotamia and Arabia teach truth, hold high communion with God, and lead a devout life of faith in the invisible. These men received marvellous answers to their prayers, and became objects of envy to those who proved to be, like Simon Magus, greedy and unprincipled.

Mythology, magic and superstition are all based on truth, and in the course of history, truth has always preceded fiction. Revelation came first, and it was succeeded by pseudo-revelations and the pretensions of wizards. In Stanley Poole's interesting article on magic in Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, he ascribes Egyptian magic entirely to negro influence. Probably the propa-

gation of error has been quite the other way. The Egyptians received magic with their cosmogony and theogony from Babylon, and from them magic filtered through to negroland.

The stronger the civilization the more powerful the results. In the first ages God gave special help to man on the Chaldean plains. It was there that men first learned to think deeply, and the chief working cause is found in the moral and intellectual impulse imparted by divine communications. God, who gave to man a living soul and made him lord of the creatures, also taught him at sundry times, and by teaching helped him to advance. Before the call of Abraham it was in Chaldea and parts adjacent that the heaven-sent impulse was imparted which aided our race to originate science, art, and philosophy, in harmony with, and contemporaneously with, the ethical and religious advance which with this assistance they made.

With these conditions monotheism must have preceded all other ideas of God, and the solar myth of the philologists takes a new form. When monotheism had existed probably for some centuries a deteriorating process commenced. Mythology grew up, and resulted in idolatry. The Phoenicians came from the Persian Gulf to Tyre and Sidon, and spending their life on the sea they imagined a god, Dagon, as the protector of their ships[1]. But in their cosmogony they follow Babylonian types, and do not ascribe creation to Dagon. In the solar myth theory we lack a basis. Some poet wrote out a myth; but was he thinking only of the sun?

[1] Sayce has shown, however, that in 1 Samuel Dagon was an agricultural deity. He might be marine also.

Probably not. He had some real object in Nature or some real man or woman in view. The human imagination works like the builder, from a solid foundation. *Paradise Lost* is based on the Bible, aided by the imaginative creations of classical and mediaeval authors. The gods of the week in Saxon mythology are, as already described, a new growth from a Babylonian original. The idea of the week is astronomical. The sun, moon, and planets, just as in China the elemental powers, are thought of by the Babylonians as revolving in a cycle. They rule each day in succession, and are a survival of the physical philosophy of four thousand years ago. Fiction is a travesty of precedent fact, and Assyrian ideas reappeared as Greek mythology. The solar myth theory is defective and misleading so far as it hides from view a large part of the facts, for Latin mythology drew religious ideas from abroad. Do we not find by many inscriptions that Mithras was worshipped in England and Germany and wherever the Roman legions were quartered? Yet Mithras is a Persian god. Was not the worship of fire maintained in Rome in the Temple of Vesta? Yet fire worship is Persian, and Vesta is therefore really an Oriental divinity. So with all the forms of polytheism; they point to something earlier, something real, something truthful. Instead of contenting ourselves with the thought that a solar myth is sufficient as an explanation of mythology, we should do well to find out what real basis for it exists in Eastern story and Eastern religious thought. Any scheme of philological mythology which omits borrowed elements seems to me to rest on very uncertain foundations. Each historic fact is complex, and if we are to explain,

for instance, everything Aryan as Aryan only, and everything Semitic as Semitic only, we do not make progress in discovering primaeval facts. Whatever is mythological should be eliminated, and the historical basis brought to light. In old Greek tradition Cadmus of Thebes represents the Phoenicians, who actually taught reading and writing at Thebes, and we have to discover whether it was in the age of Moses or earlier, and how much earlier, that the Phoenicians taught the Greeks writing, and how long before Homer myths such as this grew up. The historical fact is the most important thing in the tradition, because the myth marks merely a phase in literary development, while the historic fact marks the time when the Greeks advanced from being a nation among whom there were poetic traditions to become a people which had poets, such as Homer and Hesiod, who wrote down their compositions and became the delight of mankind.

That mythology is always preceded by realistic fact, I find proof of in Chinese antiquity. Monotheism appears first with the worship of ancestors, the practice of divination, and a dualistic philosophy. There is no polytheistic element, unless the worship of the spirits of Nature and of ancestors be so regarded. No names of gods are in any instance recorded, so shadowy is the conception. The art of writing exists, the stars have names. The dualistic philosophy was treated physically, and not mythologically. At that time the Babylonians had indeed advanced to polytheism, but ideas from the West penetrated slowly among the Chinese. Mesopotamian mythology mixed with Chaldean astrology entered China only about eight or ten centuries before Christ,

whereas they had existed in Western Asia long before. The Chinese learned polytheism from foreign sources, and began to name and worship a multitude of deities only when foreign ideas pressed into their country.

The most suitable theory for the investigator to hold is that which represents the early monotheism of Asia, wherever found, in China or in Persia or in Western Asia, as resulting from divine revelation aiding the human faculties of conspicuous men. The first teachers of mankind were devout patriarchs who persuaded men to call upon the name of the Lord. They believed in one God, and lived by faith, being in line with Abel and Enoch. In every perplexity they gave themselves to prayer. It was in the Babylonian region, in a prae-Semitic age anterior to the Deluge, that these men lived; and in arguing for their existence and their powerful influence in pervading with a religious element the mental life of their contemporaries I am in harmony with the thought of the writer of the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. We learn from that record of the heroes of faith that these men lived and laboured for truth in the earliest ages of the career of mankind on the earth. To this fact is due the great prevalence of monotheism in the belief of the most ancient nations.

The age was that when Bel, Merodach, Nebo, and Istar were still unknown divinities. Before the names of these divinities were used there was the physical philosophy, which looked out on Nature and divided the universe into heaven, air, and earth. But monotheism preceded this physical division of the universe into three parts with a god ruling each, for in this physical view of the universe we note the prevalent philosophy. It is

philosophy, and therefore not primaeval. It is too elaborated to be primaeval. Before this there would exist that monotheism of which we find traces in India, Persia, China, and in the earliest literature of Greece. In Homer, for example, the Greek polytheism exists contemporaneously with a monotheism which reveals itself when the poet through deep insight is swayed more by the moral sense than by the polytheistic romance of his time.

Belief in universal monotheism as anterior to all the polytheisms is required by the identity of moral sentiments found in all the countries which have ancient literatures still remaining. This identity of moral sentiment, which we find in the religions of China, India, and Western Asia, may be partly traced to conscience and the moral sense as its source. But it also implies divine revelation in the earliest ages. For as the Biblical record teaches, God made communications in the form of commands in the very first ages; and the history of Cain informs us that the law of murder assumed in his case a more lenient shape as the result of penitent supplication on the part of the transgressor. Any devout men like Noah, Samuel, and Job, might in those days receive revelations from above. In the absence of a written volume mankind in early days before idolatry and polytheistic philosophy prevailed might hope for divine guidance in answer to special prayer. When idolatry came in, bad morals attended it.

Early divination prevailed in the East and throughout Europe. Cicero in his treatise on Divination gives us much information upon it. In China nothing is older than divination. In that country the instruments of

divination were first the tortoise-shell. This, when scorched, reveals lines which diviners professed to decipher. Secondly, a collection of rods was in use. The diviner, seated on the ground, threw down a part of his rods. They assumed a variety of forms, which he interpreted by a book of symbols. A register was kept of successful cases of divination, and the diviner's conclusions were carefully arrived at after consulting what former diviners had said, when, with the same combinations before him, he decided on the indications afforded by the rods.

All such divination we may regard as a degraded form of early revelation. Simon Magus was not the first pretender to supernatural powers, nor was he the first to imitate devout and inspired teachers, in the hope of gaining the same influence which they enjoyed. In the primaeval monotheistic age men consulted the religious teachers in the vicinity of whom they lived, and received answers communicated by God, or not so communicated. From this ancient custom sprang the divination and oracles of antiquity. In judging of the early growth of human society and the practices current among the different nations, it is very important not to lose sight of the fact that God has always been the hearer of prayer, and that there were in the earliest ages, before the Aryan and Semitic races had commenced their career, men who feared God and worked righteousness.

In the Zendavesta and in the Chinese classics God is stated to have made direct revelations to Zoroaster in the one case and to Wen Wang in the other. Persia and China are both monotheistic in their early belief. In Homer any of the gods may speak to man, and they

may take human forms for a time. In Zoroaster's book prolonged revelations are stated to be made to him by God, who had received a name, Ahuramazda. In the Chinese classics it is only in a very few instances that God is said to make revelations, but God is represented throughout these old books as ruling human affairs justly and without partiality, and His attention can be drawn by sacrifices and prayer.

This idea of revelation is found in poems which are attributed to Chow Kung, one of the sages, and the son of Wen Wang, founder of the great dynasty of Chow. In some prose compositions of that age God is represented, as stated in the last chapter, as announcing His will in a trance of several hours' or days' duration. These revelations are ascribed to the twelfth and seventh centuries before Christ.

Such ideas, prevalent in Persia and in China, of revelations from God to certain sages eminent for their virtues, would originate in the actual revelations made at an earlier period in the countries where the earliest patriarchs had revelations from God. But if so, then the modern Tauist notions of revelation may be traced to the same age. Down to the present day pretensions to divine revelations exist. Tauist books composed by modern men are ascribed to communications made by certain gods or goddesses. These pretensions go back to a great antiquity. In the time of Confucius and later, books were written which were ascribed to eminent persons, while the author's name was not communicated. If an author was not rich, and wished his book to live, he must either give it a false authority and origin, to ensure copies being made of it, or resign the hope of transmitting his book to

posterity. This may account partly for pretences to revelation; but the idea of a revelation was earlier. Real divine communications in primaeval ages may have had a share in originating all later pretensions to revelation from God.

So, also, taking the tree of life to be a very ancient mode of representing the early belief in the future state, teachers of Christianity cannot but place extreme value on the record of the fall in Genesis, ascribing as it does to divine agency the planting in Paradise of the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In fact, there is found here a genuine instance of primaeval revelation affecting, in the highest possible degree, the happiness of mankind, both in the present life and in the world beyond the grave. It was the source of the Egyptian myth of the future state, of the Hindu metempsychosis, and of the Chinese doctrine of judgment after death. The ancient navigators of the Indian Ocean spread the belief in a future state along the south coast of Asia. From thence it was carried to the Polynesian Islands. The form in which it is there believed has been recently presented in a full and interesting manner in Dr. Wyatt Gill's *Myths and Songs of the South Pacific*. It found its way to North America and also to South America, probably by passing there from the Polynesian Islands. By land the Persians spread this belief both before and after fire-worship arose in the vicinity of the petroleum wells of Media. They include the disciples of Zoroaster, the magi, and probably many predecessors of Zoroaster. It was they that were missionaries of the doctrine of a future life of retribution for man in India, China, Tartary, and Japan.

I offer, in conclusion, what appears to me an unanswerable argument against the advocates of isolation in the growth of religious beliefs. In the Polynesian Islands Sina is the moon god, and Ra is the sun god. But Ra is the Egyptian word for the sun god, and Sin is a well-known god of the Babylonians, and is no other than the moon. Further, the several religious mythologies of the Polynesian Islands are as closely connected as the languages of the islands are with each other. Again, the spirits of the dead are supposed to go to the spirit land by the west at sunset, just as in Homer and in Western Asia. It is quite certain, then, that the elements of the religious ideas of the Polynesians were conveyed by sea, and modified afterwards in each island. If this is true on the ocean, it is also true on the continent, from which the island mythologies were conveyed. Hence it appears to be perfectly safe teaching that divine light granted to Mesopotamia, as the Book of Genesis tells us, was certainly conveyed in radiating lines from the primaeval home of mankind to the farthest borders of Asia, and beyond sea to America. It seems, then, to be right to represent whatever religious and moral truth we find believed in by the nations of the Far East as having been conveyed to them from the earliest home of mankind, and as being derived at first from divine revelation.

Dreams and belief in ghosts are not enough to explain the origin of religion. Here Herbert Spencer fails to account for the phenomena needing to be explained. Nor do ideas of kinship and the worship of ancestors suffice to explain the origin of religion. Here Professor Robertson Smith fails to solve the problem of the origin of religion among the Semites. What we need is divine

revelation from the first, communicated by devout and able men, the patriarchs of the earliest ages. We must not let go the belief in a common origin of the human race. There is a sense in which not Israel only but the whole family of man is the chosen people of God. Believing this, and remembering that God hath not left Himself in any country without a witness, it would be strange indeed if there were not vestiges of divine revelation among the early beliefs of the nations of the Far East.

Christianity appeared on the arena of human society too late to originate by imitation more than one great religion, the Mohammedan. The religion taught by God to Adam and his descendants was able to originate by suggestion the Persian, the Brahminical, the Buddhist, the Chinese, the Japanese, and the Shamanism of Tartary. But it had no book to keep human perversity under wholesome check.

This renders the recovery of the revelations made more difficult. They are scattered in old world literatures, and can only be collected by diligence and care. The advantage possessed by Judaism and by Christianity in the possession of a divine record is inestimable. Christianity is engaged in a struggle to overthrow the great religions which still keep their hold on Asiatic nations. The aid afforded by the Christian books of revelation in this conflict is great. The religions of Egypt, Rome, Greece, Syria, and Scandinavia fell long ago, unable to resist the Christian assault. Judging from the appearance of decay in Eastern religions at the present time, it may be predicted that not long after our age those religions will fall into hopeless oblivion, and one after another yield their places to the Christian faith.

CHAPTER V

POLYTHEISM IN CHINA

STAR-worship is certainly the form that mythology took in early times in China, and it followed philosophy. China gives us information by fair inference on the successive changes that took place in the religion of the Persians; and from that information it appears that the dual philosophy grew up before star-worship, and the reason of this is close at hand. Astronomical observation came before star-worship, too, because the Babylonians knew that the stars are set for signs and for seasons, and for days and for years. From this good beginning men fell to philosophizing, and with doubtful success. So we arrive at the conclusion, that as in China so in Persia, and before that in Babylon, the more intelligent views of an earlier time, founded on astronomy, morality, and sound politics, were followed by popular superstitions. Science gave the Babylonians, first the Accadians and afterwards the Chaldeans, the knowledge of Nature's laws. All went well until a priestly class secured to themselves power over the national imagination, and led that imagination where they pleased.

This is the reason that we find in China, in her

earliest history, instead of Scorpio, which meets us in the Greek zodiac, the Green dragon; instead of Leo there is the Red bird; instead of Taurus and the Pleiades we have the White tiger; and instead of Aquarius, such hybernating animals as the Serpent and Tortoise to represent Winter. But in fact the Pleiades are mentioned, and the constellation Hii in Aquarius, by name. Thus we are furnished with a definite limit to the mythological creativeness of that age. The stars in small groups or single bright stars had good astronomical names. The mythologists made larger groups, to give definiteness to the prevalent philosophy. Star-worship began in this way; but the religious instinct in man cannot be satisfied with star-worship alone. Man longs to know the great Being who rules all.

Monotheism went to China with the burnt sacrifices of their early religion. Ancestral worship the Chinese took with them also; for this, too, is found among some ancient nations—the Romans, for example, who paid honour specially to ancestors. But the ancestral worship of China was specially elaborated by the Chinese themselves, while it never blossomed into a mythology. It may, indeed, be questioned if the Chinese would ever have made for themselves any mythology whatever, but for impulses and suggestions supplied to them from foreign sources. Mythology is like poetry, the effect partly of lengthened culture and partly of new scenes, striking aspects of Nature and impressive events in history. Without these neither mythology nor highly imaginative poetry will appear, for they are the result of strong mental power and liveliness of temperament, such as are produced by mixture of races, travel-

ling, war, and the elevation of mind caused by a civilized training on specially susceptible minds. Chinese literature, realistic as it is, shows what a nation with political sense strongly developed and with clear consciousness in matters of morality can do; but they lack that imaginative faculty which wrote Homer. The star Venus has never become to them a beautiful goddess, nor have they ever gone beyond the bare outline of a solar myth.

The extraordinary antiquity of monotheism requires us to recognize that the Chinese and the Aryans were originally monotheists, and that they were so in connexion with a dual philosophy. All this was anterior to the Hindu philosophy and mythology, and also to that of Greece and Western Asia. In the Chinese classics of divination and history there is no mythology, but there is monotheism and a dual philosophy. These doctrines were also held by the Iranians, who fought with Turan in the lands of the Oxus and Jaxartes. The Aryans and the Chinese are thus seen to be alike in having preserved the old religion of an earlier age.

Herodotus notes the love of the Persians for worship on mountains, condemns it, and as a Greek declares his preference for anthropomorphic religion, with temples and altars in the Greek way.

The assignment of human form and attributes to God began in Western Asia, and spread into India, Egypt, Greece, and Italy. The Persians would not entertain this innovation, nor did the Chinese accept an anthropomorphic conception of the gods till much later.

The dual philosophy was one of the causes for the lengthened preservation of the primaeval monotheism

among these two nations. Though it led in later times to the idea among the Persians of a malevolent creator in addition to Ahuramazda, this was not the case in China.

About B.C. 1760 the Shang dynasty was established in China. There was an increase of religious feeling and faith in the country. During the six centuries of this dynasty attention was given to astronomy, and Wu hien is mentioned as a noted astronomer. This fact points to continued intercourse with the West, and especially with the land where the stars were studied with much greater zeal than they ever were in China. At the end of this dynasty appeared the Hung fan, a remarkable document found in the Book of History, which indicates that the Chinese of that age had an acquaintance with divination, dreams, and weather predictions, such as might be derived from some region where the stars and all meteorological phenomena were carefully watched.

The emperor Tang said when sacrificing, 'I dare offer a black heifer, and make a clear announcement to the divine ruler on high.' He then prays the aid of heaven in punishing that wicked dynasty which had rendered China miserable by oppression and neglect. On this occasion he also prays to the celestial and terrestrial spirits, since they are, on behalf of heaven, ministers of just retribution upon all criminals, to send down calamities on that dynasty. The beings here referred to are not beings of human origin canonized after their death, but angelic powers each believed to rule over some special department of Nature. Naturally we may identify them with the six subordinate divinities of the previous

portion of the history. This shows the nature and extent of the polytheism of that period. This emperor sometimes uses the personal term for God. At other times he calls God, heaven. The sense of the Chinese word Ti for God is emperor, ruler ; and the dominance of this meaning leads to the prefix *Shang*, *upper*, to distinguish between the emperor and the Almighty.

The question then arises, Was the personal name earlier than the name heaven? Was Ti as the word for God earlier than Tien as applied to God. For myself I think the personal name was applied to God earlier. Primitive men were not imaginative, but realistic. The ancient Chinese were not less realistic than the modern Chinese. Imaginative literature dates in China from the fifth or sixth centuries before Christ, or thereabouts. A realistic term like *Shangti* or *ti* is likely to precede an honorific term like *tien*, 'heaven.' Death by a thunderbolt would occur occasionally. Primitive men would reason from the effect to the cause. There must be an agent to inflict sudden death, and that agent is in the sky. He exercises authority over men, and is angry with the wicked. Reasoning in this way, the thought was realistic, and monotheism would precede that honorific phraseology which ascribes moral government to heaven when God is meant.

All through the periods already mentioned divination was practised to know the secret will of heaven. There was in China the same faith in the possibility to discover that will by human means which existed in Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon. The practice of divination among primitive nations implies personality in God. There was no pantheism in the world till later. Reason

preceded imagination. The Indians and the Greeks worked out a pantheistic scheme of the world.

In the twelfth century before Christ China deposed the Shang dynasty and elevated the Chow family to the throne. The actors were two wise and able sovereigns and one most able statesman. Their titles were Wen wang, Wu wang, and Chow kung. The influence of the first and third of these on the religious ideas of the Chinese was remarkable. Wen wang re-cast the Book of Divination. He kept much of the old manual and added large portions, for he was anxious to know the secret will of heaven, and often had the fifty divining-sticks handled and thrown, in order that he might discover that will. Keeping the old symbols, he combined them in a new form, and left a new manual to be used with the old. Foreign philosophy was adopted, and peeps through between the lines. He was aided by his son, who was a poet, philosopher, mathematician, and statesman combined.

The ancient diviners found it necessary to combine astrology with the symbolism of the divining-sticks. Orientation was essential. The cardinal points were defined. The white tiger, Taurus, belonged to the stars of the west, and the green dragon, Scorpio, to the east. The diviner was also astrologer, and we find traces in this manual so early as the twelfth century before Christ of the tiger in the west, just as we have in the earliest part of the Book of History the red bird in the south. There seems, therefore, no room to doubt that Chinese astrology was Babylonian in its origin, and with it the worship of the stars. The fact, therefore, that the worship of the stars is a conspicuous part of the religion of

Zoroaster does certainly, when the Chinese star-worship is duly considered, strengthen the argument for the essential unity of the old Persian and Chinese religion.

The habit of the Chinese mind is practical and utilitarian. They do not adopt Hindu ideas of caste, nor have they followed the Semitic race in abstinence from swine's flesh. But what is in their view useful they adopt from strangers readily. They have always been borrowers. This rendered the spread of Buddhism possible, and it also renders the spread of Christianity possible, because those nations which are without religious scruples are the most easily converted.

We find the constellations of the cycle of twenty-eight known to the Chinese B.C. 2300. They were also, by fair inference, known when Wen Wang was writing his manual. In Chow Kung's *Book of Laws*, there are found the astrological precepts which were intended to guide the imperial astronomers in discharging their duties. The twenty-eight *nakshatras* are also Hindu and Arabian, and this fact demonstrates the feasibility of national borrowings on a large scale. The Hindus were not navigators, nor did they erect observatories, but they borrowed the astronomy which men of other countries, navigators of the seas and builders of observatories, had learned and taught. So it was in China. About B.C. 800 the Chinese elaborated a form of astrology adapted to their own country. They took over the Babylonian astronomy and astrology as communicated by the Magi, and worked it up into a system adapted to their own country. Star-worship became universal. Each small duchy or marquisate had its star gods. Spica ruled in eastern Honan. Orion ruled in

Shansi. Legends sprang up to suit the worship. The star-worship of the cities of North China became in a certain way a repetition of the star-worship of the cities of Babylonia. The Chinese had faith in the protecting influence of stars at that time, though they lost it when the Buddhist and Tauist mythologies appeared, and pushed out of sight the old legends. While it remained during the dreary lingering centuries of the Chow dynasty, this star-worship was regarded as a protection from fires, which in cities were at that time very common and very alarming.

At the same time the worship of the Five Emperors appeared. These were in fact the five planets or essences or moving forces or colours. Call them what you please, these things are much the same to him who looks on the heavens with the Babylonian eye. If we could ask the Babylonian sage of that time what the planets are, he would have said they are the purest forms of spiritual life, centres of energy and divine in their nature. Their colour indicates their influence. They move as commanded, and their place and appearance at any time are an index to the will of the Supreme in regard to those localities over which they presided.

There can be no doubt that China in adopting this opinion regarding the planets was following the teaching of the wise men of Babylon. The mythology of the five emperors, Venus, Jupiter, Mars, Mercury, and Saturn, which entered China about B.C. 800 in a more complete shape than before, must be regarded as of Western origin. If any one should venture to deny this statement, how could he explain the invention of the sun-dial and clepsydra? These instruments were

first mentioned in China about B.C. 1120 and 800, and have been in use ever since. The Greeks say the clepsydra came to them from Babylon. The Babylonian origin of Chinese astrology is thus placed beyond doubt.

Confucius and Mencius maintained the ancient worship, but addressed no searching questions to Nature upon the being and attributes of God. They did not care to know more of the Sovereign of the Universe than the ancients knew. They held their views firmly, because those views came by tradition. They teach no astrology, no philosophy of the five elements, no cosmogony, no mythology. They were content, when asked for more information, with the agnostic standpoint, and their reply was, 'We do not know.' Their witness to God's being and nature is a recognition of monotheism as the old belief of China's wise men in an age long anterior to their own.

Lautsï's views were influenced by importations from abroad. His follower Lyetsï describes the teaching of a magician, who in a most graphic way taught the Persian and Indian views of Paradise. Lautsï believed in the personality of God. He speaks of *Ti*, God[1]. The mind of Lautsï was not content to view the universe as being without a sovereign ruler. He does not add the old prefix *Shang*, 'supreme.' Nor do other Tauist writers in early times add this word, and the omission is an evidence that the ancient Chinese belief was monotheistic. The word shang appears to have

[1] I suppose this word to be the same with the Aryan and Semitic names for God. The tone of *ti*, being the departing tone, is suggestive of a lost final. Such a final could only be *t*. On philolcgical grounds this is very probable.

been prefixed to distinguish God from the emperor, and not to distinguish the supreme God from other gods, such as the five Ti of the Chow dynasty. Here we may note a parallelism between Persia and China. God received the name Ahuramazda, and afterwards the names of the six Amesha spentas were added. As to the time when this addition was made, it would be before the 'White ti' and 'Red ti' were heard of in China. The Amesha spentas would then become an imperfect Persian development of polytheism previous to the eighth century before Christ. It is a curious fact that the term Shangti, so common among Confucianists, is used for the ancient emperors in the *Su wen*, the most important medical treatise of China, a work of about B.C. 400. The school of Confucius mean by it the Supreme Lord of the World. The Tauists use it for former sages who attained the imperial dignity. This shows that Ti, the Tauist word, and also that of the Confucianists, is the true word for God, as it is also for the emperor. This then renders it indisputable that Lautsï, in employing this term, was a monotheist. The Brahman philosophy of the time had crept into China, and with it a cosmogony which he adopted. His cosmogony was simply *one produced two*, the principle of light and darkness, *two produced four*, the four seasons, *four produced eight*, that is, the transformations of the universe figured by the fifty divining-sticks and known as the Pa kwa. This was not properly a cosmogony, if that term be dissociated from the yearly beauty of the spring and the fading glory of the autumn in the regular course of Nature, but it is a cosmogony which includes both the beginning

of the universe and all present and past transformations visible in it.

In fact, it has more of India than of Persia in it. Lautsï's teachers derived their impulses from Central or Eastern India. It was after the age of the Vedas that Brahma came to be pictured as dwelling in a Paradise, and there was beside Brahma, a Prajapati, or creator. Before this, Dr. Oldenberg tells us, there was a time when Brahma was still a principle rather than a realized, fully constituted god. But before this again Atman was the breath which became the universe, and was, so to speak, the soul of the world. This was the view of the later Vedas. When such a view was held by thinkers in Eastern India it crept through into China and originated the philosophy of the Tauists. The teaching of the astrological period had stirred men's minds. Mathematics and the philosophical part of the old divination had excited men to think, and when the new ideas came in from India about the Atman, which is either the reason *tau* or the breath *ch'i* of the Tauists, they developed a remarkable literature with thoughts and aspirations both far-reaching and deep. Lautsï's word for the Indian Atman is *Tau*, 'reason,' that of Lyetsï is *Ch'i*, 'breath.' Lautsï thought of the underlying principle which pervades the universe. His disciple thought of the breath which originated all things. The word Atman then embraces both. Lautsï's high thoughts must therefore be partly ascribed to a foreign source and the stimulus afforded by foreign thought.

In this way Tauism can best be accounted for. A practical nation like the Chinese could not, unaided, originate

a book like that of Lautsï. The thing is unknown to the history of human opinion. It is too different from the literature which preceded it to be entirely original. A Chinese is not a philosopher except by education. Lautsï would not write the work known as Tau te king except under the excitement of powerful influences. If we trace the use of a favourite phrase like Tsau hwa chu, 'creating Lord,' 'the creator,' it is new in the Tauist authors. It corresponds in force to the Sanscrit Prajapati; and when this is understood, the mystery of the origin of Tauist ideas on God and creation is solved.

The Tauists in using the term *Tsau hwa chu* spoke of a creator as a fashioner rather than a maker out of nothing, but they would not have found occasion for the term at all but for the Brahmanism of Eastern India. Nor would they have elevated the word vapour, *ch'i*, into a primaeval principle, the simplest form of the matter of which the universe is composed, but for the same neighbouring philosophy. So also Atman, and even the word Brahma, is the original reason, and to some extent that which became the Greek λόγος, the *dabar* or *millah* of the Babylonians. This doctrine sprang up on the banks of the Euphrates, was imitated in India, and transferred to China. Chwangtsï says of Lautsï that he taught that light was produced from darkness, and actually existing things sprang from invisible substance. The early Tauists came to have the notion that pure essence underlies the grosser forms of Nature; and this mode of thinking was contemporary with astrology, with astronomy, and with what may be termed not inaptly the microcosmic theory of the human frame. In our bodies the five elements wander as the planets do in the

sky, the veins, arteries, and other vessels proceed from the head to the feet, like the twelve hours round the horizon. Spring, summer, autumn, and winter, are all represented in the physical constitution of man. Both alchemy and astrology rest upon the doctrine that man is a smaller universe. To the alchemist and astrologer this is a *sine qua non*. It is evident then that China has borrowed largely from Babylonia, for otherwise how could this astrological science be the same in both countries?

It is not then saying too much to assert that the cosmogony, the divine reason, and the monotheism of the *Tau te King* are Babylonian in origin, but modified by Hindu philosophy on their way to China, as well as by the opinions of Lautsï himself when writing the famous book which goes by his name.

Mythology with names began very early among the Accadians and Egyptians. In Sargon's days several gods had received names, and that was B.C. 2250. The Persians had their own system of divine government by subordinate divinities, with monotheism at its base. The Hindus had old gods of a more spiritual nature brought with them to India. They had Nature deities, like the rest of the Indo-European races, invented by themselves. The Scandinavian and Teutonic Wodin is almost certainly of Tartar origin. I offer a proof of this here. The Latin *ira*, the German *wuth*, the Celtic Gwydion, the god Wodin of the Sagas, appear to be words derived from a mother word in the Mongol tongue. There we find *ada*, an evil being, a fury. *Ada ujihu* is in Mongol to 'look on as bad.' *Agoril* is *anger*, and *agorlaho* is 'to be angry.' The Tartars very anciently dropped *ag*, to

form *ada*. In this state it passed into Indo-European. *Ira* in Latin has lost initial *g*, as the Mongols have. This account of the word Odin may be supported by adducing other words. It is a fact that the word *elf*, 'fairy,' is *albin* in Mongol, and *lip* in Chinese. Also the *Erlking* of Goethe is *erlig han* in Mongol, where *erl* is *erlig* and *king* is *han*. These three examples support each other, and suggest that Tartar mythology is Teutonic mythology in an early stage. The angry appearance of sky and air in a thunderstorm is the source from which this mythology grew up in Tartary and was conveyed thence to the western homes of the Teutons.

From this it will follow readily that the old religious usages and beliefs of China and Europe ought to be carefully compared. We need not indeed compare Chinese early mythology with the Olympian mythology of Homer, with any hope of finding resemblances, because that mythology is too abundantly pervaded with poetic creativeness, but the more ancient Nature worship of the Italians may be compared with good reason.

The Lares and Penates of ancient Italy should be considered in view of the Shêtsik of old China. The Penates appear to be the Chinese tablets of ancestors. The ancient Romans had images. The Chinese had tablets inscribed with the posthumous title of the dead. Penates is 'inner' or domestic. Tsu is the 'source.' The Lares are the Shê or zhat of China, rulers of the land. By mutation of letters the Eastern word became *lar* in Italy, and this word, changed from *dat*, agrees in its elements with *terra*, 'earth.' The Chinese written form 𥫱, *Shê*, means spirit of the land. That I am right in such an identification of the Chinese word *Shê* with

lar, is supported by the three examples from Mongolian. In addition it may be mentioned that the terrestrial gods had sacrifices presented to them both in Italy and in China, and that in China they are still offered at the altar of earth in Peking. In both cases the sacrifices were buried in the earth and libations poured on the ground. This custom is in China still maintained. The *superi dii* of Plautus are analogical to the 天神, *tien shen* of China. This term may be rendered the celestial gods. The *inferi dii* of Livy are the terrestrial gods, or the 地祇, *ti ch'i*, or *di gi* of China. The word *gi*, here used for earth spirits, means earth. The Mongol word for earth is *gajir*. The Greek θεοὶ χθόνιοι, the gods of the nether world, is an exact equivalent, except that the Chinese gave these spirits no names, while the Greeks called them Demeter, Persephone, Hermes, and the Erinyes. Through Greek fondness for myth-making, the names were given. The Chinese and the Latins are behind the Greeks in that respect. There must then have been some central position in Asia where these religious usages could grow up. The traditions preserved in Virgil's poem of the flight of Aeneas of Troy show that Asia Minor was a midway link, and this accords with other features of resemblance between the archaeological facts connected with South Europe and China. The old mythology of China is like that of Italy and Greece, as that of Scandinavia and Germany is like that of Mongolia and Manchuria. The connexion is latitudinal. I find the same thing in the names of animals. *Canis* and hound mean 'the follower,' and are *k'iuen* in new, and *k'un* in old Chinese. Dog is *nohai* in Mongol, *n* having changed

to *d*, and *g* to *h*. The word *vulpes* and ἀλώπηξ, Lith. *lape*, names for the fox, are *dobi* in Manchu, and *li* in Chinese, probably for *lip*. The root means running in *laufen*, 'to run.' The Tibetan is *lba*. So if we search for the equivalent of the Chinese *gok*, 'the stork,' we find it in *ciconia*, the stork, and in κύκνος, the swan. The root means 'taking long steps.'

This seems to show that migrations have followed isothermal lines, and that the Caspian Sea has caused a bisection in the band of country over which nations in their migrations eastward and westward have passed. The religious traditions of China and of South Europe show striking resemblances, because the movement of the nations, or groups of families, having these traditions proceeded along parallels of latitude south of the Caspian.

The Chinese *lares* or *shetsik* are classical and ancient. They did not receive names; yet the worship of these spirits of the land and grain was polytheistic, if we wish to speak strictly, and it continues to the present time with little change. Such worship would easily grow up among an agricultural people believing, as all the Asiatics do, that there are spirits everywhere in Nature. They take the place which Ceres occupied in ancient Italy, and belong therefore to naturalistic religion grafted on the ancient monotheistic faith.

An age of poetry succeeded the age of Tauist philosophy, when prose composition alone was the fashion. It was near the close of the fourth century that Chü-yuen flourished. The founders of two great religions were contemporary in the sixth century before Christ, that is, Confucius and Lautsï. Philosophy became dignified

and majestic through the saddening effect of political disappointment on the minds of these two men, who had fallen on evil times, and whose sense of sorrow at the triumph of evil among their contemporaries had the effect of making them great. This was followed in China by literary advance. Writers developed new power. Prose composition became a fine art, and poetry was cultivated with much greater success than before. In the hands of Chwangtsï and Lyetsï, mythology based on profound philosophy assumed an attractive form. Every ancient emperor and sage who had become known to fame was credited by these writers with great advance in ascetic studies, such as satisfy the Tauist philosophy. They were followed by Chü-yuen the poet.

Chü-yuen is not so full of mythology as Homer, because the Greeks were extremely fond of mythology, and Homer had consequently embodied in his poems an immense quantity of myths. But just as the poems of Homer were the fullest repository of the mythology of his time and, at the same time, did much to extend and perpetuate the reign of mythology over the fascinated minds of his countrymen, so it has been with Chü-yuen. He led the fashion in the literary use of Tauist ideas, and was himself the founder of an important school of poetry. In the Han dynasty some of the best authors took delight in following him, as for example Pan-ku, both in his mode of writing poetry and in his use of the mythology of the genii and the fairy islands. Neither of them believed that such beings as the genii existed, and yet they wrote as if they did [1].

[1] The late Marquis d'Hervey de St. Denys published an elegant French translation of the Li-sau, the principal poem in the collection. In his notes

Chü-yuen describes the sun as the prince of the east, and he does so in a poem which he calls by this name, Tung kiün [1]. 'With a bound he comes up in the east, shining on our balustrades at Fu-sang.' He calls the first of his nine songs 'the eastern emperor Tai-yi.' 'On a lucky day and a favourable hour in the morning with reverential joy I go out to sacrifice to the eastern emperor.' The star Tai-yi, 3067 *i* of Draco, was worshipped with special honour in those times. Fu-sang is the name of an island in the Eastern Sea. In his imaginary wanderings on the mountain Kwun-lun he arrives at the palace of spring, the abode of Fu-hi, who had in the poet's time become the green emperor of the east. In a journey which he imagines himself to take in company with the Sun, he says, 'In the morning I let go my wheels at Tsang-wu (in the modern Kwangsi). In the evening I arrived at the hanging gardens on the Kwun-lun mountain. I wished to stop a while before the carved gates. But the Sun every instant was coming nearer to setting, and if I waited I must stay the night.

he has collected much information on the mythology, geography, and history of the poem, and supplied historical elucidations. The plants mentioned in these poems are very numerous.

[1] When a paper containing these views was read a few years ago at a meeting of the Peking Missionary Association, Dr. Martin said that the nearest resemblance to the Chinese poet Chü-yuen would be found in Ovid, because he was banished to the shores of the Black Sea, and sighed at the loss of the pleasures of the court, as Chü-yuen did. Perhaps, however, Ovid, though he had the same melancholy as Chü-yuen, had not so much of a patriot's zeal, and at any rate he did not commit suicide. Dr. Martin at the same time gave some strong reasons for regarding Chü-yuen as a true believer in Tauism. But then, remarked a Chinese friend to whom I mentioned Dr. Martin's opinion, Chü-yuen would have ceased to sigh for office, and would have been, if a Tauist, quite contented with the life of a reclnse. There is no doubt that the best poet with whom to compare Chü-yuen is Ovid.

I met with Hi and Ho, ministers of the emperor Yau, and by him charged with the regulation of the seasons. I asked them to stop the flight of the hours. I then looked at the mountain Amtsi (behind which the sun sets), and asked the driver of the Sun's chariot not to press forward. The way was long with many windings. I searched everywhere above and below for a virtuous prince whom I might serve. I gave my horses water in the fountain of completeness. I tied up the reins of my chariot to the leaning mulberry at Fu-sang (that I might rest for the night). I tore a branch from the Nok tree to brush the Sun and make him brighter. (This tree grows at the extreme west of the Kwun-lun mountain.) When I had passed a little time at ease I proceeded on my journey. Before me was Wang-shu, the moon's charioteer, who acted as my herald. Behind me the ruler of the winds urged me forward swiftly. The phoenix was attending me in front with his brilliant beauty. The ruler of thunder gave me warnings from behind.'

From this extract and the rest of the poem, if looked at, it will be seen that there was in China, in the fourth century before Christ, a mythology which included rulers of the wind and thunder, a mountain, Kwun-lun, where divine persons reside, charioteers of the sun and moon, a porter at heaven's gate, a daughter of Fu-hi, who became a goddess of rivers, and a sovereign Ruler in heaven whom the poet calls Ti[1]. In introducing the

[1] He mentions also the five sovereigns, in the east Fu-hi, in the south Yen-ti or Shen-nung, in the west Shau-hau, son of Hwangti, in the north Chwen-hü, in the centre Hwangti. Their colours were green, red, white, black, and yellow. The planets were Jupiter, Mars, Venus, Mercury, and Saturn.

names of this mythology the writer gives the rein freely to his imagination in describing the situation, but the names themselves are derived from earlier sources, and as to the writer who first employed them we are left in uncertainty.

The Confucianists do not allow that the poet of the dragon boats, Chü-yuen, was in any proper sense a Tauist. But if he is a true specimen of a Confucianist, then it must be admitted that Confucianism has a great sympathy for Tauism. This indeed is often the case. Chü-yuen says in the poem Yuen-yeu, or 'distant wandering,' 'My ancestor Kau-yang (Chwen-hü) is too far away. Whose path then shall I follow? Again, I say, the four seasons, how quickly they pass! How can I long remain here? The emperor Hien-yuen (Hwangti) I cannot take hold of. I will follow Wang-ch'iau the immortal man and amuse myself as he did.'

Wang-ch'iau was the son of Cheu-ling wang, who was emperor from B.C. 571 to 544. He was contemporary with Confucius. He met with a teacher of the immortal life named Fu-chieu kung, and was taken away by him to the regions of the immortals.

The poet continues, 'I will feed like him upon the six kinds of air, and drink the breath of midnight. I will sip the breath of the south in the morning, and imbibe the warm red air of the dawn. I will thus secure the purity of the soul. The clean uncontaminated breath will enter, and the impure defiling breath will be expelled. Pushed on by the warm south wind, I will go where the red bird builds his nest. There I lodge for a night with Wang-ch'iau, who went to the immortal land. From him also I learn to distinguish the excelling virtue of the one

primaeval breath. He speaks, and this is what he says. The ultimate principle of truth can be received, but not taught to others. It is so small that there is nothing within it, and so large that it has no bound. Confuse not the soul. The soul will act spontaneously. The one primaeval breath, the one great soul, at midnight will prove its presence. Wait with the breast emptied of all pride and evil desire, and you will find that before commencing any activity the many objects of activity will be gained without exertion. This is the gate of real power.'

We receive this lesson in Tauist principles from the lips of a Confucianist poet. This quietism, this waiting for the soul to reveal its own powers, is what the true Tauists teach, although the speaker is not a recognized adherent. The reputation of this poet is that of literary power, not that of religious leadership. He has not real faith in Tauism. He adds, 'Wang-ch'iau was silent. I had heard his valued instructions, and was on the way to carry them into effect, when suddenly my wanderings began anew, and I found myself with the winged genii on the mountain of the elixir of life.'

It should be remembered that when the doctrine of Tau is rightly apprehended, a man begins to grow feathers and wings upon his body. This notion, occurring in a book of the Chow dynasty, should lead us to look back a long way for some of the coarser parts of Tauism, for it was not only the refined doctrine of Lautsï that sprang up in those remote times, but the belief in its being possible that the body may become immortal.

The poet continues, 'I linger in the old land where the inhabitants never die. I wash my hair in the morn-

ing in the valley of light. In the evening I dry my body on the leaning trees which grow on the border of the universe. (In the text Kieu yang, 'the nine lights.') I slake my thirst with the minute drops of the splashing cascade, and my food is the pure essence of the topaz and jade. My face looks fresh and youthful. My spirits grow vigorous, and I gain a strength I never had before.'

The valley of light here spoken of has the ancient name Yang-ku, the valley in the east, where the sun rises. In this locality there are trees which lean on one another. Visitors remain nine days on the lower branches and one day on the upper. But another account says that Kieu-yang is the name given to a place at the edge of heaven and earth, and this seems the preferable sense.

Li-sau and the other poems of Chü-yuen show that poets have had much to do in making Tauist ideas popular. Political disgrace has often shut off the avenues of public employment. In such cases it was a tempting occupation to let loose the poetic imagination. Imperial frowns cannot prevent the poet from pleasant dreams.

Another ancient book ought to be consulted. It is a book containing much folk-lore of the China of two thousand years ago, and contains therefore Tauist elements. We usually regard Lautsï as the founder of Tauism; but it was merely as a philosopher that he was so. There was a large admixture of folk-lore with the early Tauist philosophy. The popular fancy threw a nimbus of mythic glory round the heads of Wang-ch'iau and others who led secluded lives and were imagined to be immortal. When Wang-ch'iau disappeared, he said

he would return on a certain day. He was seen on that day seated on a stork.

The folk-lore work known as *Shan Hai King*, the Classic of the Hills and Seas, is written in a flowing style, and has in it something of the literary power of Tso Ch'ieu-ming and Chü-yuen. It was not shut up in a tomb, but permanently maintained itself by its appeal to the prevailing love of Tauist literature in the Han dynasty and by the charm of its style. It speaks of Kwun-lun as the imperial residence of the Supreme Ruler. As such this mountain corresponds on earth to the heavenly palace in the upper world. It is regarded as the earthly abode of the gods. Its special ruler is Lok-ngu, with a body and claws like those of a tiger, twelve tails and a man's face. The Yellow River of China has its source in this mountain.

The Queen of the West, this work adds, is worshipped at the Jade mountain, 350 *li* to the west of Kwun-lun. Her appearance is human, but she has a panther's tail, a tiger's teeth, her hair in disorder, and a discordant voice. She presides over diseases[1]. A little more to the west, at a place 200 miles distant, another ancient Chinese emperor is worshipped. He is known as the White ruler, or Shau-hau.

This book, in speaking of China proper, gives a detailed account of mountains. When it proceeds to tell what is beyond the seas many wild things are said. Yet these have their importance, as indicating what was then believed by the Chinese. In some countries there were

[1] Later on, in the twelfth chapter, she is described as leaning on a table and holding a sceptre. To the south of her in the picture are seen three blue birds, who obtain food for her.

men with three heads; others had a pole piercing their chests and coming out at the back. Some had human faces, wings and birds' beaks suitable for catching fish. At that time the figure supposed to belong to the gods of the cardinal points may be judged of by what this book says. Keu-mang, the spirit of the east, had a bird's body and a human face. He rode on two dragons. He is the god of wood and of the spring quarter.

The size of the world as measured by order of the emperor Yü was found to be 539,800 paces from east to west. Here we must regard the pace as five feet.

This book finds Kwun-lun not only in Central Asia, but also beyond the sea on the north and one in the northwest. This last is described as another Kwun-lun. It is 800 *li* in circuit and 100,000 feet high. All the gods live here as their home. The Red water has to be passed to reach it. Its steep sides are precipitous, and those that have both love and great ability can climb to the palaces of the immortals. In the picture which was before the writer was seen a beast of large size like a tiger with nine heads. Each of them had a human face and they were facing the east. The beast was represented as standing on the mountain Kwun-lun[1].

It was the *Sï Ku Tsiuen Shu*, an elaborate critical work of last century, which first directed my attention to the point that the original author of the *Shan Hai King* had pictures before him while describing mythological personages and animals[2]. It is certainly

[1] *Shan Hai King*, chapter xi. par. 16.

[2] The *Sï K'u Tsiuen Shu* derives this idea from Chu-hi and two other anthors, of whom one is Wang Ying-lin, editor of and commentator on the *Santsi King*, Three Character Classic.

interesting to find accounts taken from actual pictures in colours by this unknown author in the period B.C. 400 to 300. We may suppose these pictures to have been brought by sea from Western Asia to China by the trading vessels at that time visiting Cochin China.

At a period not much later we learn from Pan-ku's poems on the eastern and western capitals that Han Wu-ti constructed a palace in which expressly to represent the gods and genii; and here were instituted sacrifices to them, so that he might have the satisfaction of witnessing their actual presence. In this new palace, called Kan Tsiuen Kung, 'palace of the sweet fountain,' a platform was built, and here were to be seen paintings of the various gods and spirits of heaven and earth and of the star T'ai-yi [1].

In certain sacrificial chapels built of stone, near Tsi-nan fu in Shantung, carvings descriptive of objects belonging to the old Tauist mythology have been recently found. They are represented in the work called *Kin Shï So*. These pictures contain examples of the animals and personages which then figured in the Tauist mythology. These wood-cuts representing ancient carvings are very instructive, as genuine examples of ancient Chinese art, and afford a tolerably exact representation of the ornaments anciently found in palaces and temples in China as in Western Asia. The chambers of imagery, of which Ezekiel speaks, were not only to be then found in Assyria and Chaldea, but in

[1] Li Shau-weng is in Pan-k'u's history stated to have memorialised the emperor to the effect that if he wished the gods to come, the apparel worn in the palace must be like that of the gods and genii.

countries farther east, and, as we learn from these engravings, in China as one among them.

One cave is at the city Fei-ch'eng hien, at a distance of 60 *li* north of the city. The sculptures date from the second century. The date on the monuments is A.D. 499. In the third carving are represented two persons with holes pierced through their chests and backs. A pole is placed in this hole, and is carried by two bearers. The two persons are ambassadors from this country, which was situated in South-eastern China. In the fifth engraving there is a representation of the intended search for the nine tripods of the Chow empire, lost in the river Sze. The emperor Ts'in-shi Hwang ordered them to be raised, and here is a representation of the way in which that attempt was made, and failed.

Another and more extended series of sculptures is found at Kia-siang hien, in the department of Tsi-ning, at a spot 24 *li* south of the hien city. The god of thunder is borne upon clouds on a car. To beat his drums he holds in each hand a mallet. He has a human face and figure. His costume is that of China at the period of the sculpture. Six youthful demons draw the car. The lord of wind behind blows out a blast from his mouth. Forked lightnings appear before and behind the god, administered by a demon, who with the help of a funnel pours the instrument of punishment from a vessel into one of the upright drums affixed to the car. In front are two demons holding bottles which may contain a supply of rain. Two others hold chisel and mallet, one of them is killing a prostrate criminal by striking the chisel into his neck. Round him is a rainbow, which is represented as a dragon with two

heads, each of which touches the ground. The bands of colour in the bow form a triple row of scales in the dragon's body. A female demon lies upon the bow holding a long whip of lightning (tien-t'se) in her left hand, and an inverted bottle from which she has poured rain in her right. The bottle she seems to be offering to the other demon, who is armed with chisel and mallet, in readiness for action. Doubtless he will fill it with more rain, and when the thunder cortege reaches the spot where judgment has again to be administered, the replenished bottle will first discharge its contents as a thunder shower, and then the demon will descend by the rainbow to complete the execution of justice on the victim by the use of his chisel and mallet. The wife and son of the victim who is already struck, are seen near him with streaming hair and uplifted hands, overcome with consternation.

Among the Kia-siang hien sculptures another very interesting group is that of the Great Bear god. He is seated in royal costume on a dais in the quadrangle of the Bear. He wears a broad-sleeved robe, which crosses diagonally at the neck. The two streamers on his felt bonnet indicate royal rank. The bonnet consists of skull-cap, back, and flat-topped crown. He looks forward at four suppliants, two kneeling and two standing, and all of them holding their hands in praying attitude. The artist has placed three of them within the bow formed by five of the seven stars. The fourth kneels just under the seventh star Benetnasch behind the others. Three officers of state stand behind the god each holding a baton. Just above the sixth star is another called Chau-yau, 'the Beckoner,' Beta Bootes.

It is held in the right hand of a winged man suspended in the air.

Chinese polytheism had become what is here represented in the second century of the Christian era, when the temple sculptures just described were carved. The art is of foreign introduction. The mythology is in agreement with that of the poems of Chü-yuen. Without the pictorial art of Western Asia, China could scarcely have elaborated her mythology with such minuteness of detail. Religion is here aided by art. These representations are an attempt to repeat with the chisel what Chü-yuen had pictured in his poetry. Many Han dynasty authors of that time also delineated in poetry mythological conceptions of a similar kind. The poetry has been preserved. The sculptures were covered from view under a mass of débris till early in this century. This mythology was a native growth developed from the sun and star worship of earlier ages.

The process was something like this. If there be divinity on high, men reasoned, there is divinity everywhere. They made a god for the trees, a god for fire, a god for earth, and a god for water. The Persians worked out their mythology in this way, and the Chinese followed their example. The Persians made Mithras god of the sun. The Indians followed them, and later the Chinese. The sun in the Mongol system of ideas[1] is the mother of the moon, because it is the cause of the changes of the moon. It is perhaps on this account that the sun is feminine in the German language. The development of the feminine in language is plainly connected with mythology. If the account of what took

[1] Banzaroff.

place, as I now give it, is correct, the history of the introduction of gender into language is likely to yield itself up to research.

The results of this inquiry into Chinese mythology are:—

(1) That in the classics there is very little of it, and that probably in the age of the classics it scarcely existed at all.

(2) In the *Tso chwen*, a historical work of the time B. C. 460, there are allusions to the god of the west and of the east, Pe ti 'white god,' Ching ti 'green god,' as introduced in North-west China.

(3) At the same period the Tauist mythology was growing up aided by two Tauist philosophers.

(4) The stellar mythology was also extending at the same period, and was pushing itself into poetry. All these seem to have come from the West to China.

(5) With the preceding as a beginning the Tauists proceeded to work out their own mythology, taking the Buddhist scheme of a hierarchy as a model.

In modern times the three religions have become friendly, and mutual toleration is the principle on which they coexist. This has led to political quiet, and a great deal of indifference and scepticism. The scholar, while he pities the popular credulity, says, 'The gods exist for those who believe in them. They do not exist for those who do not believe in them.'

The worship of animals occurs in modern days. As in Egypt zoological mythology followed a more refined conception of God, so it has been in China. The original monotheism has been metamorphosed into animal worship. First the philosopher Chwangtsï mixed philosophy

with the metempsychosis. Then later the fox, the weasel, and some other animals have come to be looked on by the people as possessing a divine power of transformation, and as having an influence on man, for the most part malign.

Star-worship is dead, and has been dead for many centuries. The Buddhists try to keep up the worship of the goddess of the Seven Stars, but not very successfully. Divination is no longer believed in by the ruling class. The mythology of the poets of two thousand years ago has died away, leaving little trace in the minds of the people. A zoological mythology has taken the place of these older superstitions. The toad, the snake, the weasel, and especially the fox, are in the northern provinces much worshipped. The people are occupied with agriculture and trade to such an extent that they have lost sight of the higher religious ideas. They worship those animals which would, if angry, injure their crops or do them harm on a journey. The transformation of foxes into men, and men into foxes, is to the modern Chinese thinker a subject of deep interest. The book called *Liau chai* contains many fox stories, and is much read. The Hindu doctrine of metempsychosis has at this late date produced in China this singular and disappointing result. But the normal worship of the country is still, as it always was, sacrificing to ancestors.

CHAPTER VI

THE MORAL IDEAS OF THE CHINESE

CONFUCIAN literature, from first to last, has held the opinion that the sense of right and wrong, and that inner voice which calls on men to be benevolent, just, loyal to duty, chaste and frugal, are directly bestowed by heaven upon mankind. To the Chinese consciousness, heaven or God is always on virtue's side in creating, watching, judging, rewarding, and punishing. Confucianism holds that man came from God, and in Chinese philosophical writers human nature is on this account represented as good. The Christian doctrine of original sin is a stumbling-block till it is explained in Butler's way, and then the Confucianist objection ceases.

Such being the Chinese view, we are compelled to ask whether this clear and unhesitating presentation of the moral question is not due to original revelation in the lands from which the Chinese came. To this the answer should be in the affirmative. The Chinese believe that man as a whole is the son of God, and in particular that the human conscience and moral sense are a gift from God, because their ancestors were taught this by their religious instructors of the primaeval period before they arrived in China.

In the earliest records of the Chinese there is the same clearness in moral distinctions, and there are the same virtues which appear later. The books containing them are fairly worthy of our trust, and there is no sufficient reason for rejecting the literary chronology of Chinese scholars. During the present dynasty they have shown a spirit of scholarly research which does them the greatest credit. In this age, aided by the multiplication of printed books, they have studied ancient books carefully, and weighed evidence on one side and on the other with reference to doubtful claims, with great deliberation. Last century, and in the century before, much was done in editing and criticizing texts. They still hold to the genuineness of the early books. Foreign scholars in China have shown signs of doubt in regard to the early books. Some have suggested that they do not long antedate Confucius. But the testimony of a good half of the foreign students of Chinese is still in favour of their genuineness.

If the early parts of the *Shu King* are genuine, we have trustworthy testimony by contemporary writers to Chinese morals for 2,300 years before Christ. Among the proofs of genuineness are the two following. The emperor Tau gave both his daughters to one husband, who was to succeed him as emperor. The object of the father was to see how the son-in-law would behave at the head of his family. If he succeeded in this, he would succeed in governing the state. There is another, and only another, instance of sisters marrying one husband, and it took place a few centuries before Christ; then the custom ceased. Another proof of genuineness is in the fact that the titles of officers of government

are different from what they were afterwards. There is also a proof of a philological kind. The 'departing' tone or accent grew up in the period from B.C. 200 to A.D. 500, while the 'rising' tone grew up in the period B.C. 1700 to B.C. 300. In the rhymes of the first part of the *Shu King* the rising tone was not regarded. There were no tones then. Later on there were, as the rhymes prove, three distinctions of tone. There is poetry written before there was a rising tone. There is poetry written when there was a rising tone. There is also poetry written when there were even tone, rising tone, and falling tone. This is an auxiliary proof of the genuineness and antiquity of the documents containing the rhymes which have no tone distinctions. To these proofs may be added the astronomical evidence. The positions occupied by the stars of the zodiac of twenty-eight are what they should be if we recognize the annual correction required for the precession of the equinoxes. The documents recording the places of the stars ought then to be received as genuine. The authority of the late Professor Pritchard of Oxford and Professor Russell of Pekin favour this view.

Assuming on these grounds the genuineness of the old documents in China, we may proceed to the study of morals in the third millennium before Christ, as there presented to us. The age of Yau and Shun is an age of wise government, conducted on moral principles. Benevolence and justice were the rule followed by these intelligent monarchs. They made the happiness of the people their aim, and were rewarded with high fame through all succeeding ages. In administration they sought to attain a just medium between too great

indulgence and too great rigidity. This age has ever since been regarded by the Chinese as a golden age; and what is meant by 'golden' here is an age when moral and political virtues were exhibited. There is an air of reality in it. The people suffer by inundations, and the sovereign selects officers to subdue the floods by labour directed by intelligence. The difficulties in China are great, on account of the nature of the country. It consists very much of broad alluvial tracts, through which great rivers flow. These great rivers come from Tibet, which is enormously high, being upwards of 6,000 feet above sea level. The rainfall in Tibet and Mongolia fills the rivers three times in the year. The task of the government is to prevent destructive inundations at these three periods by a system of embankments. The call for hydraulic work in controlling rivers leads to a topographical description of the country; and in this account of old China there are many interesting details of the nature of the soil and the character of the productions in each province. The whole wears the aspect of reality. The astronomy supports the ancient date of the topographical descriptions, and the floods, which gave opportunity for the administrative task, still occur, and must have occurred in those ages. Truly remarkable it is to find in China a government which 4,300 years ago developed a moral and political ideal of this high character. The reason why the Chinese were able to do this was that they had a keen moral sense and a high idea of duty, aided by habits of industry and a good physique.

Now it is nothing new in the history of ethics to say that its power in human society has been evenly dis-

tributed through the ages, and was as influential in the past as it is in the present day. But it may be well to make prominent once more the proof of this by an appeal to China. So long ago as 4,300 years moral teaching was as powerful in China as now. It then worked out striking effects on governments, by being conjoined with wise political arrangement and administrative energy. It helped to make monarchs and officers of government benevolent and just, diligent and prudent, and the people filial, industrious, and frugal.

Then where did this primaeval morality originate? What is the reason that vice and erroneous philosophy overcame a good moral theory? Why did China decline so much in morality that Confucius despaired of his country? We are forced to go back to an earlier time for the origin of moral ideas, an age before Chinese history commences. For the sources of Chinese morality we must go back from the early literature to the language. The language was earlier than the writing, and we shall find the moral ideas enshrined in the language, the creation of which, as in the case of every nation, is the first intellectual task undertaken by the people. There is little that is mythical in language at first. The growth of language is chiefly realistic work; myths come later, when language has already been formed. In language-making by each of the races, the words are old, the form is new, and the grammar is slowly evolved. But the grammars are found in any language in a double form, as, for example, in French. It is partly Latin and partly self-developed. The words are partly Latin and partly Celtic and Teutonic.

When we proceed to examine the testimony of Chinese

words, especially old words, to the early prevalence of moral ideas, we must bear in mind that the words are not in their original shape. The etymology of expressions belonging to primaeval language, to the mother tongue of all the languages, ought to be already existing in the primaeval language itself. What we can do in Chinese is to approach as nearly as possible to that original language. In opium smoking, after a few weeks, a craving is set up. This is called *yin*, a 'drawing.' Since the alarming and senseless spread of opium smoking, this word has been applied specially to express the craving. It is a new word, derived from *yin*, 'to draw.' The power to make words never ceases. When needed a word is made, but always from old materials, as in this instance.

The Chinese being the oldest type of language that we know, the etymology of all the moral terms is important. From that etymology we may form a sensible approximation to the primaeval etymology. *Jen*, 'benevolence,' is softness, and so also *jen*, 'man,' may be. But *nü*, 'woman,' is also soft, and there is another word *jen*, 'hard,' and this may better perhaps be assigned as the etymon of the word for man. *Ni*, 'just,' is a verb of cutting. This might be expected. Loyalty is cutting through the middle, that is the heart. *Chung*, 'loyal,' is from *tom*, and 'heart' is *tim*. In fact *chung*, 'loyalty,' and *tim*, 'heart,' are the same word. The heart means the middle. Writers in primeval times drew a stroke through a square, bisecting it, and this is an instance of ideography. Economy, moderation, and self-restraint are expressed by *tsit*, which is also a verb of cutting. Filial piety is 'imitation,' that is to say the virtue, filial

piety, received its name from the son's imitating his father, or learning from him with docility. So it is with a daughter. The virtue is as much feminine as masculine. Patience is endurance; *nai* and *nin* are the same, and both mean 'continuance.' 'True,' 'truthfulness,' 'reality,' 'fidelity,' are expressed by *sin*, *shi*, *chen*. These are one word, and express the roundness of a pebble. The virtue here meant is 'steady,' not to be disturbed. Hardness is the idea expressed, and it finds its type in round stones, but the sound is that of grinding, and is older still. Among the vices, crookedness, craftiness are expressed by a word 'to cross,' either *kiau* or *cha*, or by such a word as 'slippery,' which is *hwa*. Moral evil, expressed by *ok* for *tok*, is 'hatred of me' or 'opposing me.' With the lost initial restored, it is *dik*, to 'oppose.'

The intuition of right and wrong expresses itself in Chinese by the word *shï*, 'it is,' and *fei*, 'it is not.' 'It is' in Chinese means 'it is right,' and 'it is not' means 'it is wrong.' Nothing can be clearer, than that simple pointing first in one direction and then in the opposite suffices for the expression of the ideas of right and wrong. In Europe 'right' is derived from the right hand. In old Chinese 'it is right' is expressed by the demonstrative, and the demonstrative has the same force as the word 'right' with us. This reminds us of Kant's doctrine that intuition teaches the fundamental ideas of geometry, of time and space, and of morality. But the origin of the demonstrative pronoun is in pointing with the hand or finger. In defining what is right, when we use a gesture to express what we mean, we use an unspoken demonstrative. The gesture is a dumb pronoun, and

the audible pronoun is a symbol of the same value as the gesture. The conception of right and wrong is intuitional, and therefore we use straightness and crookedness to express the conception in clear language.

We may find positive proof of the intuitional knowledge of right and wrong in the oldest languages. The moral intuition is an instinct, as appetite is an instinct to take food, and is found in the oldest words. No words are older than the demonstrative pronouns, because they are necessary in common speech, and constitute the wheels on which the vehicle of language depends for motive power. Physical words are older than moral words and originate them. The physical words which precede, and are the sources of moral words, are the pronouns, and the origin of the pronouns is in the hand which strikes and points. The hand striking originates a sound which gives phonetical shape to the pronoun, and this is the name of the hand also. We have words for the hand, for the act of striking, for the act of pointing, and for the demonstrative. It is in the demonstratives, which are the outcome of this process, that the moral intuition finds its expression. As the appetite for food is instinctive, and is not the result of the reasoning of sages or of observations in sociology, so the moral intuition of right and wrong leads at once to the adoption of demonstrative pronouns in order to find expression in human speech. We have to deal with the facts of human life as exhibited in the earliest pronouns we can find. The question to be decided is, Do the Chinese and other nations in their vocabularies show an immediate connexion between the demonstratives of their oldest literature and the ideas of right and wrong? If

so, we may fairly conclude that men did not at first wait to make utilitarian observations on the effect of actions in order to learn if they were right and wrong, but made their decisions of a moral nature instinctively. The gift of the soul from God was accompanied by the gift of the moral sense. This leads to the linguistic evolution of moral distinctions. There is such an evolution undoubtedly. For in whatever language we make search, the principal words at the disposal of the moral sense are closely related to demonstratives and names for the hand. In English 'right' is a hand word, while 'wrong' means 'twisted.' Right is evolved by the law. Wrong is formed by the imagination when comparing physical and moral phenomena.

The sages of China, having unmetaphorical words for the ideas of right and wrong, naturally had exceptionally clear views on morality.

One or two remarks may here be added on words as witnesses to the existence of a moral instinct. If the etymology of a moral term is strictly demonstrative, the sense of right and wrong is instinctive. *Fei* means 'it is not so.' *Pi* is 'that.' *Fei* in the compound *fei lui*, 'bad sort of persons,' has taken an adjective sense and is the same with our 'bad.' The ordinary negative *put*, 'not,' is the same word. The hand points to express a negative, or to indicate the demonstrative sense. It is then applied to mark moral badness. This etymology seems quite certain.

An unpleasant smell originates a moral term in correspondence with it. So it is with a pleasant fragrance. Some words for hating and loving take origin in the same way. Moral terms connected with harmony would

be derived from sweet and well-according sounds. On the contrary, discordant noises are used to describe discord in the state or in a family. The eye assists in the formation of moral words. For example, in carpenters' work evenness and unevenness are taught by the eye. Words expressing justice are formed in this way. We may see a carpenter lifting the pieces of wood which are to dovetail together. He looks sometimes with one eye, and sometimes with both, and very carefully, so as to secure a perfectly even surface. In all such adjustments we see how the eye had a share in forming certain moral words with the meaning 'just.' It was thus that *kung* and *p'ing* for 'even' were formed in Chinese. The sound is that of collision, but the sense is that of careful adjustment. The eye cannot give the sound to words, but it may assist in giving any sense it can be called in as a witness for.

We must always bear in mind that Chinese words are taken from an older language, and that their etymology really would be better explained in the earlier speech from which the Chinese language is derived. But in the absence of data we can still, fortunately, trace the origin of words, moral or material, in Chinese, with considerable confidence, because of the great age of the Chinese type of language. It is certainly easier to dis-discover the physical origin of moral and intellectual words in Chinese than in a Semitic or European language. This is because Chinese is still monosyllabic and keeps close to Nature, while such comparatively new forms of speech as Hebrew and Greek exhibit windings and modifications of great complexity, so much so that many grammatical forms, in Greek for instance, of

superfluous nicety in meaning, only lived a short time. In explaining the physical origin of moral and, indeed, of many other terms, there is no language where a natural and reasonable etymology can be arrived at more readily than in Chinese.

In all cases the application of physical circumstances to moral conditions is instinctive, and the evidence from language is thus shown to be in favour of an intuitional moral sense.

The belief in one supreme God favours the regular development of the moral ideas in man. The connexion of moral consciousness with monotheism comes out clearly in Chinese. Moral consciousness means recognition of law, and law prevails over men so as to influence their conduct much more powerfully when the thought of the Sovereign Ruler is present. Consequently in China, where heaven has always in the thought of the people had the personal idea more or less prominent, the conception of right and wrong has never been wanting in clearness. It is the same with republicanism as compared with imperialism. A personal king makes loyalty clearer to the mind of a subject, and promulgation of a law from the king is a more powerful sanction to certain minds in a nation than if promulgated by republican authority. Monotheistic sanction is much more powerful than the sanction of inferior gods. Ancient authors are continually, when speaking of Zeus, in the habit of picturing him as the one Supreme God. Θεός and Zeus are often interchangeable. The human mind naturally takes refuge in monotheism, when in a reflective stage, even in Greece, a country where polytheism was so powerful, and the gods were so much feared.

The old religion of China being monotheistic, the moral distinctions are found to be clearly laid down. When the personality of God is obscured, and heaven is thought of as an impersonal power, the moral sense is not destroyed. It is still operative in witnessing to right and wrong. It is the same with us. We say, Heaven will defend the right, but we prefer to say, May God defend the right. The appeal to heaven has a powerful moral effect on mankind as well as an appeal to God. The reason is that heaven, when thus appealed to, is thought of as sovereign, almighty, omniscient, and omnipresent, just as God is. The thought of these awful attributes awakens reverence in the listener's mind to a degree unknown to polytheism.

The effect of monotheistic faith on public morality is seen in the ethical purity of Chinese literature. Vice is spoken of to be condemned, and history's chief office is to reward virtue with her approval and to shower condemnation on the guilty and disloyal. They have seized on a very true and important conception of the historian's duty. The historian is a moral teacher. Just as the prophet in ancient Israel lashed the vices of the age and passed a favourable judgement on every pious prince, the Chinese historian who undertakes to write a narrative of events in a defunct dynasty deals out unsparing censure on conspicuous criminals and rejoices to invoke admiration on the loyal and the filial.

The beautiful moral tone of early Buddhism speaks for the state of the Hindu mind. The moral sense was in India tenderly susceptible in the days of Shakyamuni. The compassion felt for deluded men by the founder of Buddhism was exceedingly remarkable. But it was not

exactly moral. He pitied intellectual delusion, and was himself entangled in the snare of atheism. It was philosophy which led him wrong. Polytheism had caused the Hindu mind to wander far astray in the days of this great man. The clearness of view of monotheistic days had become dimmed by delusive legends, and distorted by many-coloured fancies. Still the moral light was there, as it was in Greece, where it is the chief attraction of many of the most splendid passages in Homer and Sophocles. From whence then did the moral sense clearly displayed in Chinese, in Hindu, and in Greek literature, originate? It was not an invention of poets and historians. Plutarch did not create his heroes. He simply described their heroic deeds, that posterity might know what brave men had done in Greece and Rome. The moral sentiments which make life beautiful and nations happy came by inheritance from an earlier age. The identity of moral sentiments in countries so far apart as Greece and China points to an earlier age when God spoke to man in the Mesopotamian plains, and inspired patriarchs gave instruction to their fellow-countrymen in religion and morality. This was before the Hindus and Persians had separated from the Teutons and the Greeks. It was in what we may call antediluvian times, before the days of Shem and Heber, when Semitic and Aryan speech were both in the womb of the future. This is shown by identity of moral sentiment and monotheistic belief. The chronology of Ussher is no guide to us now in determining the length of the earlier ages in the history of the world. Our chronology is that of Egyptian and Babylonian antiquity. Guided by these, we see how

very brief are the records in the early chapters of Genesis. What they give us is history from the pens of God-inspired men in a form which shows us that there was an age of primaeval revelation when morality was taught to young humanity.

It is the results of this early teaching with which we meet in the ethical portions of the Zendavesta, the Vedas, and the Chinese classics. These works were all written at a much later date, but the important matter is that they speak the sentiments of the nation in each case. They are the key which unlocks the door to ancient Persia, India, and China. As we read them we know the religious and moral beliefs and opinions of the people in the first (Zendavesta and Chinese classics), second (Vedas and Chinese classics), and third (Chinese classics and Vedas) millenniums before Christ. Without a common basis of moral instruction in the first age previous to the separation of the Semitic and Aryan families from the common stock, the identity of moral sentiments would scarcely have been able to exist. At least it would not exist to the same extent, for in all ages education has been necessary to develop the moral intuitions of the mind. Where the moral intuitions have been brightest we see the effects in literature, and good literature has been produced where the education of the young was seriously undertaken. As in a nation, so in the world; it was early moral education in the first ages of man's life in Asia that sowed the seeds of the morality of which the vestiges remain in the early literature of Persia, India, China, and countries further to the west.

At the present time it is possible in Asiatic countries

to compare the moral ideal exhibited in contemporary social life with the moral ideal of the sacred books in each nation. That there should be deterioration is inevitable.

In China we see this both in Tauism and Buddhism. Tauism as an ascetic system has tended to produce laxity of the common sense. It is said in one passage of an honoured Tauist book that the Yellow Emperor, the favourite hero of early Tauists, governed the empire so successfully that the people became united in heart and mind. If they did not weep on the death of parents, society did not blame them. Here the reader who has been trained as a Confucianist is conscious of a shock to his moral sense. He feels that it is unnatural not to weep over the death of father and mother. Ascetic thought ought not to obliterate family love and filial duty. The ascetic must be wrong in his principles. More than this, the condemnation of society ought to be pronounced on such men, and Tauism, though it has obtained a certain popularity on account of its asceticism and mysticism, has not escaped severe censure; for society will not fail to condemn any relaxing of the bonds of moral duty. Tauism, like Buddhism, holds filial piety with no firm grasp, and it is the special merit of Confucianism to elevate this virtue and maintain it firmly to the last. For filial piety, according to the opinion of Chinese patriarchal wisdom, is the pinnacle and glory of all the virtues. Nor has Buddhism added to the intensity of the Chinese moral consciousness, nor made duty present itself more powerfully to the popular mind. This is seen in the common phrase, 'In your home you have two living Buddhas.' The

father and mother are referred to in this proverb. It is a protest against Buddhist asceticism. The higher duty of filial piety condemns the transference of honour to Buddha. From the first the moral consciousness of China has resisted the appeal addressed to it from the lotus throne, urging the adoption of an ascetic life.

Buddhism inverts the moral standard of right and wrong, and elevates compassion in the place of duty. The Confucianist consciousness observed this, and has been a consistent opponent from the first to the Buddhist doctrine.

The consequence is that in the modern state of China morality has become lax, uncontrolled, and unsatisfactory. The country fell an easy prey to opium smoking. Foot-binding spread with wonderful rapidity to almost all the families. The one vice has had a career of two centuries. The other has had a career of ten or eleven. Infanticide has grown up through excess of population, and through the habit of emigration as at present conducted. The women are left at home in poverty when men go abroad to seek a better livelihood than they could obtain at home, or settle down as mechanics in distant cities. This causes a surplus of girls in the families of the poor, and when the moral sense is weak tends to spread the practice of infanticide.

Note A.

That part of the moral consciousness which consists of compassion differs from that other portion which respects duty. Buddhism has had an influence, distinct and powerful, on the people of China in regard to compassion and gratitude. This is shown in the *Ching tu wen*, a book written in the Sung

dynasty, which was contemporary with the Norman kings of England. In its appeals to the Chinese people this book attains a tone of deep pathos when inculcating the duty of abstinence from animal food. This abstinence is, in the writer's opinion, properly grounded on compassion. He was a high officer, who submitted to the tonsure from conviction, and devoted his talents as a scholar to the inculcation of the doctrines of Buddhism.

Note B.

The languages of Europe and Asia may be compared in the following manner: ψεῦδος is something false. In the form *pseudos*, *s* is an insertion; *peud* is the word, *os* being noun suffix; but this is *falsus*, 'false.' *Pad* or *pud* are the true root. In Chinese the corresponding word is *put*, 'not,' *fei*, 'it is not.' In Greek, Latin, and Chinese the words here collected are pronominal. A demonstrative is used to deny.

Take another example, ἀληθής, 'true': *a* is a prefix, λ stands for *d*, *θ* stands for *t*, *ης* is suffix. But in Chinese we have *shih*, 'true,' 'real.' In this word *h* stands for a final *t*, *sh* stands for *zh* and for *d* ultimately.

So it is all through the vocabularies. They are beyond contradiction identical, and there is no solid reason against the recognition of the identity of the Chinese vocabulary with the European vocabulary.

CHAPTER VII

EARLY SPREAD OF THE BELIEF IN A FUTURE STATE

THE doctrine of a future state was spread very early by the Persians into China, Manchuria, and Japan. Again and again in the progress of the centuries the Christian Church has been reminded of the teaching of Zoroaster on the subject of final judgement and an abode of joy for the good and of grief for the wicked, beyond the present life. The Persian people seized with eagerness on the doctrine, and by them it was propagated in countries farther east. The metempsychosis crept into India by land routes or by sea, and somewhere near the age of Solomon, the Phoenicians, or some other Semitic navigators, must be regarded as having nearly at the same time with the Persians taught the Indians to believe in a future life. While the nation of the four castes was learning the art of writing from Western teachers, they received their pictures of the condition of the soul in the future state with curious interest. In consequence, all India learned to believe in the metempsychosis.

Among Buddha's early opponents in the cities of India, when he stood up to preach, were the fire worshippers, and this fact shows that Persian propagandists

were actively engaged in his time in spreading their religion in India. The Buddhists in Afghanistan and Cashmere, about the time of Christ, were age after age in close contact with the Persians. Later on when they advanced to Turkestan they were in the very home-land of Zoroaster and of the Avesta. The deep impression made on Buddhism by the belief in a future state on the part of Semitic navigators and Persian teachers or magi is thus accounted for.

But we must look to earlier dates and to more distant countries, if we would understand what were the earlier results of the teaching of Zoroaster on this subject, and of the more ancient Persians before he wrote the Zend-avesta.

The faith of Buddhists in a future state is very much more real than some persons suppose, who imagine that the dogma of the Nirvana has completely neutralized the metempsychosis. It ought to be remembered that the Nirvana is simply a philosophical expression explaining away the future state. The subtle mind of ancient India rejoiced in this achievement. But reason is never so strong as faith. The Nirvana cannot as a hope ever compete with the belief in the continued existence of the soul in the hold it has on the mind of man. The Avesta teaching forced its way into the doctrines of the northern Buddhists. In both we find the teaching of the eternal light, of a paradise in the heavens, of a subterranean abode of torment, and of a Saviour. I have conversed with many Chinese Buddhists on the Nirvana, and it is my impression that the hair-splitting logic of the Nirvana teaching has not shaken in them the soul's abiding faith in continued existence beyond death. It

is equally my impression that, in Europe at the present time, the materialistic philosophy now prevailing will not succeed and cannot succeed in eradicating from mankind their deep-seated belief in the soul's immortality.

I now proceed to say what the Chinese think of the human soul and its prospects of enjoying future happiness. The knowledge of the soul must as a rule precede the knowledge of the future state. By slow degrees men arrived at the belief in the soul as separate from the body, and when this point had been reached the future state became natural and credible.

Successive waves of Western knowledge reached China at intervals. When great empires rose, trade was favoured and knowledge reached China from the West. The old Babylonian empire, the Assyrian empire, the later Babylonian empire under Nebuchadnezzar, followed by the Persian and Greek empires, were epochs of growth in knowledge among the Chinese.

The Chinese had at first a belief in the soul such as exists in ancestral worship. Later, when Tauism grew into prominence, the idea of the soul became much more distinct, and Buddhism made it more thoroughly popular.

The Chinese idea of the soul is peculiar. *Shen*, the word for the soul, is not mentioned in the classics except as separate from the body. The idea *kwei*, 'demon,' 'ghost,' when spoken of, is separate from the body, yet it is looked on as having proceeded from the body, and it is a word which belongs to other languages. It is the same word as *ghost* in our own. The epithets 'foreign devil' and 'son of a demon' are now applied by many of the Chinese in an opprobrious sense to any foreigner.

The same word *kwei* is used in Buddhistic translations from Sanscrit for the Pretas of Indian myth, unhappy beings who are fattened by no offerings of food till the Buddhists compassionate them, and present them with a supply in the autumn of each year on a special feast day. This word *kwei* in the ancient classics is used to designate, in conjunction with *shen*, certain powerful beings who control the changing phenomena of the natural world. Yet it is not to be credited that these two words *kwei* and *shen* were not both in the language all through the classical period in the sense of soul. Etymologically *kwei* should mean 'breath,' and *shen* also. They would therefore be derivatives from words meaning breath in the age before the invention of writing. *Shen* is *sunis*, 'soul,' in Mongolian.

When the complicated thought of Western countries forced a gate of entrance to China about the Confucian period, the soul began to be much spoken of, and words for the soul were required. *Hwun* and *kwei*, *p'ek* and *shen*, *tsing*, *ch'i*, and *ling*, seven words in all, came into use. Among them, for example, *shen* was employed by writers as the opposite of *hing*, 'the body,' for the immaterial nature of man.

It is in the books of the eighth century before Christ that the soul becomes spoken of more distinctly than before, and the conception of the future state acquires freshness and force. In the year B.C. 721[1] a certain duke had taken an oath that he would not see his mother again till he met her at the 'Yellow Fountain.' This is a phrase used for death. The under-world is here referred to, and the phrase has remained in the written

[1] Legge's *Classics*, vol. v. p. 6.

language ever since as a name. It was the under-world of which we read in Homer and in Virgil. The duke in the Chinese history had no way of evading the fulfilment of this oath, till he was advised to cause a subterranean passage to be made, where he could meet his mother and still keep his oath. The tunnel, as to depth, was to be dug till water was arrived at. The mother, when she met her estranged son below the earth in the cavern, sang, 'Within this cavern deep our joy springs up like a fountain.' When the son came up from the cavern he sang, 'Escaped from this cavern deep, our joy flows like a river.' The courtier who brought about the reconciliation of mother and son in this ingenious way is commended highly by the Confucianist historian for the service he thus rendered to filial morality.

This is as far as the Chinese of that age had gone in entertaining the idea of a future state. The story of Adonis appears to have been invented in honour of Ishtar, and out of pity for the prince who died young, having been killed by a wild boar. Venus or Ishtar loved the prince, and, as we read in Ezekiel viii. 14, the worshippers of Ishtar wept for the death of her favourite prince. His name in Semitic being Tammuz, meaning 'the hidden one[1],' there is a truth here underlying the invented story. Venus sent him to visit Persephone, or, as the Assyrians called her, Ningkigal. In the Japanese legend Izanami is the creating goddess, and Izanagi the creating god. Izanagi goes down into Yomi, the Hades of the Japanese early religion. In different countries the belief in an under-world, where the souls of the dead reside, assumes forms

[1] טמן, bury, conceal; Jap. *yomi*; Chinese, *am* 'dark'; Mon. *tam*, hell.

that disagree in various ways. If in China we wish to find messengers sent down to Hades to witness the judgments passed there by the king of the dead, or to rescue some beloved relative from torture, we must go to Buddhism. There we find what we were seeking. Chinese Buddhists of the Sung dynasty wrote works of fiction to relate what was seen on these visits to the invisible world; yet at an earlier period, as in the days of Confucius, the idea of the future state was pushing its way into China through the door which was then open for the reception of foreign art and astronomy, foreign medicine and religious usages.

In Japan the desire of the people to receive foreign teaching was stronger than it was among the people of China. At the present time the same thing is true in regard to the reception of Christianity. The Japanese increase in the number of Christian converts every year is nearly double that which takes place in China, while China has ten times the population of Japan, and the rapidity with which Japan is accepting Christianity is therefore nearly twenty times as great as the rapidity with which China is accepting it. Japan is more capable than China of the rapid absorption of foreign thought. In this way I would account for the close resemblance to Persian views which exists in the Japanese legends having regard to the under-world. But the Chinese, though they have a colder nature than the Japanese, are geographically nearer to Persia, and would receive Persian notions in advance. This is the reason that the date when the Chinese historian makes the first mention of the under-world is so far back as B.C. 721, or as 2,613 years ago. At that time the Odyssey had probably been

written two centuries. At that time also in thousands of temples in Egypt and Western Asia the future state was openly promulgated by painting, sculpture, and the oral teaching of the priests; and in the mysteries the future state would be taught by pictures, such as we see in the *Illustrated Book of the Dead* by Le Page Renouf.

The future state is implied in the sacrifices of the Chinese. Ancestral worship was the first addition made to the primaeval monotheism, and the first institution which teaches a future state. The ancestors are always in subordination to God, and the fact that this feature in primaeval religion is limited to China, ancient Rome, and some other localities, indicates that it was in the earlier ages local rather than universal. It is different with the idea of one supreme God. That appears to be universal. It remained distinct to the national consciousness for many ages in China, Persia, and Western Asia. The Tartars, Tibetans, and Japanese allowed the thought of God to fade somewhat. At least they allowed it through mental torpor to remain combined with the idea of heaven.

There is an indication here that in religious thought the order of origination was first the idea of a personal God, secondly of law, thirdly of honorific terms, such as heaven, to represent God; lastly, of the future life. This last gained intensity from the need which was felt to ensure the carrying out of just retribution on the righteous and the wicked, and thus, if there be any unevenness in the good and evil awarded to men in the present life, to redress the balance in the future state. This order in the appearance in language of the four

ideas here referred to seems to be demanded by the conditions.

The vividness and sadness of human life have a powerful effect on language. A shipwreck, an earthquake, or a fire, would add intensity in early times to the meaning of words, especially to those of a religious kind. Before Chinese was a language, when mankind still spoke to each other in their earliest idiom, in that far-off age, such events absorbing public attention at the time when language was being formed, would certainly have a share in word-making. The creative efficiency of man in making language is in direct proportion to the vividness of his impressions. It is the most vivid impressions that are best recollected, and words that are associated with striking events have the best chance of securing permanence by repetition.

On the minds of early men the destruction of life in an avalanche of rock or snow, or when houses are carried away by river floods, causes a distinct impression of the act of God. An earthquake brings God before the mind with unusual distinctness: then men think of law and retribution, and at length by reflection, retribution in the future state. God appears in the natural world as a just and merciful sovereign, and at such a moment it comes to the soul with the force of a revelation that God is a just and merciful sovereign in the future state also. It is at times of vivid disaster and deep emotion that religious words, and those affecting the moral sense and virtuous emotion, take the most intense signification, and have permanence assured to them in the languages used by mankind. It is just here that the divine revela-

tion of the Christian theologian coalesces with the discoveries of natural religion.

Let us continue to follow the New Testament, the Samaritan Codex, and the Septuagint, in regarding the Book of Genesis as prae-Mosaic and compiled from documents in the age of Moses under his direction. Then the tree of life in Paradise is a revelation of the future state in the first age. That is the position which believers in the Christian sacred books will mostly suppose they ought to take. If we place the teaching of the future state where the Book of Genesis places it, it is a part of the primaeval revelation of God. These portions of the book were, with other portions, translated from Babylonian documents. The archaeological style of the Books of Moses supports this view.

We can then satisfactorily study the contemporaneous growth of the speculations of mankind on the future state. The early ideas of the Egyptians were derived from Babylon, and among those ideas the belief in a future state was singularly prominent. God taught His creature man the existence of a future state in the earliest ages. Men exercised their own reason on the subject and gave reins to their own fancy, and so in the various countries of the ancient world the spread of the belief in a future state proceeded with footsteps slow, but sure.

The sources of the belief of a future state was twofold, natural and revealed.

The province of theology cannot and ought not to be separated from natural religion. Christian theology based on revelation treats of the extension of natural religion in the region of the supernatural, and therefore

theology is as necessary as metaphysics to form a part in the circle of the sciences which a man of wide culture should know.

The idea of the future state is connected specially with death and its attendant circumstances. The words used in Chinese for death, for heaven and hell, for ghost, for soul, for the after life, for burial, for sacrifices, are all worthy of attention. Their etymology is interesting.

Sï, 'die,' means 'ended.' *Mot*, 'to destroy,' 'to disappear,' is also used for 'to die.' *Mong* is 'to disappear.' *Shï* is 'to be lost.' *Shang* and *sang* mean death, but if analyzed they mean to be wounded or injured only. The honorific expressions for death show that the Chinese, however sceptical they may be about it, will not let go the happy hope of immortality which the Persians and Hindoos taught them. To die is to go on a journey among the immortals, it is to mount the skies on a stork, or it is to mount upward and become a guest with God. The words 'with God' are to be understood, though not expressed. They also say of the newly dead, 'he was sick and passed away.'

Heaven means extension, the outstretched, a word made with the help of the outstretched arms. The Persian word Paradise is in Chinese the 'heavenly home.' Earth is formed by the sound of the foot stepping or stamping on the ground. Hell is the earth-prison, a Buddhist term to express the Sanskrit *naraka*. *Yuk*, 'prison,' is probably to fasten by tying. *Kwei*, or 'ghost,' is *k'i*, 'breath,' which in dialects is called *k'ui*, pointing to a lost final letter *t*. *Shen*, 'the soul,' would be anciently *dan*, and would early receive the meaning to stretch, the stretching energy. *Hwun* is a cloud.

Ling is the influence of dropping, the efficacy of falling rain. *P'ek* is probably ψυχή, and seems in Chinese etymology to be the beating of the heart, taken as an indication of life. When the heart-beat ceases the soul has fled. The Greeks thought the butterfly was the truest image of the soul, trembling, hoping, lingering, flying. To them the soul was a butterfly, and the butterfly a soul. But this is too poetical to be a real etymology. Myths do not give a true etymology. Safe etymology is realistic rather than imaginative, and we must recall the physical conditions of the age much earlier than the mythical period when the word was made. The after life is expressed in China by means of the language of the metempsychosis. 'After life,' or 'after age,' or 'return to life,' are the phrases employed. They are in contrast with the 'former life' which is *ch'ien shï* in Chinese. To sacrifice is to set out a banquet. Death supposes the possibility of the future state, when looked at through Chinese phraseology. It is the breaking or cutting the breath of life three inches in length. If this breath can be saved from being dissipated in space, life may be continued after death. Tauism says you may lengthen life by training the *chi*, or energetic vapour of life. This is the origin of the expression known as 'internal elixir,' while the external elixir was cinnabar. The internal elixir was of a spiritual nature, and was in fact peaceful meditation, favoured by long sitting on a round mat, like that of a Buddhist hermit, by extreme temperance in diet, and especially by the avoidance of passion. Let there be no violent ebullition of feeling, and life will be lengthened.

The Tauist aim to lengthen life grew strong after the

three philosophers Lau, Chang, and Lye had written. A philosophic basis was laid, and their ideas were built upon it as a foundation. Lyetsï had spoken specially of the islands where the immortals reside. Such stories as he records stirred in the mind of religionists of their school strong longings for such longevity as the inhabitants of those islands enjoy. Legends began to grow up near Tai shan, and this became the centre of the hope of a future life; but it was not till the first century of the Christian era that the clustering of legends round this mountain bore fruit. The deceased statesman Tsï ch'an, of the Cheng kingdom in Honan, was subsequently represented to be the chief administrator in the appointment of invisible rulers of cities. A good and efficient officer when he dies has assigned to him a post over some city. This duty of appointing judges is believed to belong to Tsï ch'an, because in the history[1] he gives an account of the elevation of the god of fire to his post by the emperor Yau's edict. This was a posthumous appointment. It is in this way. The spirit of Orion was in possession of the body of a prince in Shansi, and the prince was dangerously ill in consequence. Tsï ch'an on arriving could tell him the cause and the cure, and understood the power exercised by stars in controlling the sound condition of the body politic, and the health of the body of princes. Also Tsï ch'an shows himself to have been a believer in the physical philosophy which a century later Confucius and Mencius avoided. He speaks in the tone of the medical books of the time, and expressions like the 'five elements' and 'six vapours' used by him convey to us some idea of his philosophy

[1] *Chinese Classics*, vol. v. pp. 708, 709.

and of the opinions common in his day among his contemporaries. Such was his idea of the world we live in, that such phrases as these were accepted by him as explaining in a satisfactory way all cosmical phenomena. Consequently he was held to be a sage, and the invisible world was placed by the Tauists under his control. He makes whom he pleases magistrates to rule the dead belonging to every city.

It may be seen here how the actual world is embraced in that which is invisible, and how the future state of the Tauists is, so to speak, included in the present life. Yet this is so understood that there is another region to which souls go after this life. The Tauists think they have an advantage in elevating some pure-minded and humane officer to the position of unseen magistrate. It is a reward of virtue which in their country is greatly appreciated. The idea of the future state is in China twisted into this form, and as the neglected state of a ghost to whom no sacrifices are offered is too chilling and sad to be agreeable, the prospect of an invisible city magistracy to which a popular hero may be elevated by the ancient statesman Tsï ch'an is extremely pleasing to not a few who hold official posts in China. Even if they are sceptical (and Confucius taught his disciples to be sceptical regarding the future state), the idea is still agreeable because it is the reward of a genuine popularity. The people round the temple will reverence such men as gods. The officers will offer them worship, and the emperor will command annual sacrifices to be presented to them after their death.

As Tsï ch'an's name is connected with these ideas, and as he understood astrology and could predict the

future by the stars, it is plain that this class of ideas is derived from Western countries, where astrology was believed and practised.

From what has been said it appears that there was no happy world for the soul beyond death in the oldest Chinese opinion. The existence of paradises is a Buddhist and also a Tauist doctrine, and does not occur in Chinese literature before the Tauist philosophers began to write.

Thus we are brought to the conclusion that for 1,600 years after the commencement of Chinese literature, B. C. 2300, the Chinese were probably without the hope of transference at death to a happy world beyond this. The worship of ancestors and the faith which it teaches in the existence of the soul separate from the body imparted a certain satisfaction to survivors during this long period. Ancestors were believed to be pleased with the worship and gifts offered to them by their descendants, and their residence was supposed to be near or in the ancestral temple. These ideas had a remarkably wide influence in ancient China, because every person was interested in maintaining the worship of his own ancestors. The soul was breath, and might be scattered at last into thin particles. After Crëusa had prophesied to Eneas her husband, in his flight from Troy, his future fortunes, Virgil says (in the Second Book of the *Aeneid*) :—

> 'Tenuesque secessit in auras
> Ter conatus ibi collo dare brachia circum :
> Ter frustra comprensa manus effugit imago
> Par levibus ventis, volucrique simillima somno.'

Virgil thinks of a ghost, a human shape without solidity. The Chinese have the idea of ghosts, but when

they trouble a house by haunting it they are not visible. They are supposed only to be audible. Ordinarily it is to prevent the dissipation of the breath or vapour of which the soul consists that the filial Chinese son or grandson twice a year presents soothing sacrifices. Ghosts are believed to hunger, and offerings of food are regarded as very acceptable. The actual visibility of a ghost-like form is rare. It occurs in poetry, but less often in common life. If the descendants cease to sacrifice, the vapour of life is dissipated, and consciousness comes to an end.

In consequence the retention of the ancient custom of ancestral sacrifices becomes very important to the nation. This is specially true in regard to the reigning dynasty. The sacrifices are carefully performed to all generations of progenitors as far back as to the grandfather of the first reigning emperor.

The residence of the spirits of the departed is according to this very ancient belief supposed to be near the ancestral temple. Tablets are kept there, and brought out to the front hall on the days of sacrifice. The ghost remains in the chapel with the tablets at other times. This would be the old belief before the spread of Tauism.

If there was any more clear view in regard to the future state, we do not know it from the classics.

In the writings of Confucius we do not find anything on this subject more definite than in the classics. The cautious tone of the great Chinese sage prevented his uttering distinct statements in regard to the dead. The people of his time believed more in the future state than he did. But he performed the prescribed sacrifices and followed closely the customs of antiquity. He believed,

therefore, in the duty of sacrificing to ancestors, and he practised the duty reverently. He worshipped, he tells us, 'as if the spirits of his ancestors were present.' He inculcated the same reverent performance of the customary worship on his pupils. He must, therefore, be represented as a believer in the future state, so far as it is implied by the worship of ancestors.

In the *How Han shu*, a work recording Chinese history from about the year A. D. 1 to A. D. 200, the Tai shan worship of a god who there controls the state of the dead is mentioned. At death souls were supposed to go to that mountain.

So it is said, in the same work, of the Manchurians of that age, that at death their souls were believed to go to the Red mountain, some thousands of miles north-west of their home in Liau-tung. The mountains meant would be the Altai mountains, near which then, as now, resided Turkish tribes, who would in that age have no religious guides so zealous as the Persians.

This view of the future state in Tartary, then held, shows that the soul was believed at death to travel a great distance, and to find a resting-place on some summit of a high chain of mountains. The same tribe that held this to be the true after-life of the good, also opened the doors of their tents to the east to welcome the sun. The Mikado in Japan and the emperor in China are said to go to heaven direct, borne by the stork. Inferior persons go to mountains.

Such was the faith regarding the future state taught by the Persian religionists in these countries. The stars in China were named many of them in the earliest ages, but many more have names of which there is no record

till about B.C. 300 or B.C. 500. On the whole the new grouping of stars, which may be reasonably supposed to have been elaborated about that time or earlier, more probably at about B.C. 800, does not disagree in the main with the view of the future state of the Han dynasty. But in state documents no particular star is mentioned as the paradise to which a deceased monarch ascends upborne on the wings of the bird of longevity.

At present Buddhists are called by rich persons to read liturgical passages from their books, to secure the rescue of the dead from hell and transfer them to the western paradise, where they listen to the teaching of the Buddha of boundless light. Here occurs the Persian element in the doctrine of the future state. This is confirmed by the Chinvad bridge, which in Buddhist temples in China is represented in stucco, with paradise beyond on a mountain ascent, and the place of the condemned below. De Groot's new work on China shows proof of a careful study of Chinese Buddhism, and he holds the same view of the infusion of Persian views into Buddhism by the north-western Buddhist writers after the Christian era.

In Peking there is a temple of the Tauists where there were seven years ago about twenty aged pensioners. The older the more welcome, is the rule. One old woman or old man, if asked, will say I am 112, another will say I am 108, or 104, or 97. It is considered very favourable to the repute of the monastery that these aged people should be there. They are living proofs of the power of the Tauist religion. One of the modes in which the income of the monastery is expended is to provide these almshouses for the aged, in order that

it may be shown how extraordinary is the effect of the Tauist virtues in procuring long life.

The Tauists teach a very definite future state in the arrangements of the Tai shan temple. It is called the temple of the Eastern mountain, or simply the mountain temple. In this temple there is a palpable imitation of the Buddhist future state in the representation of paradise and of hell.

In the one case the idea has sunk into that of longevity. In the other a place of happiness for the good is provided, together with a separate abode for the workers of evil in this world.

The Buddhist future state being like it, the Tauists must have borrowed their notions on this point from Buddhism. But both in the Buddhist and Tauist representation of the future state there is the Persian bridge, across which the righteous walk safely to Paradise. It is too narrow and slippery for the evil-doer, who falls into the abyss below, where he is in hopeless darkness for ever.

This is the Persian doctrine, and it has been borrowed from Persia by the Mohamedans.

The Japanese have for Hades the phrase *yomi no Kuni*. *Kuni* is 'kingdom,' the same as the Manchu *gurun*, 'kingdom.' *No* is the mark of the genitive, and is of pronominal origin. The same genitive is found in Mongol. *Yomi*, 'the invisible world,' is in Mongol *tam*, 'hell.' This is the Semitic *taman*, 'to hide,' and it is also in Sanscrit *tamas*, 'darkness,' and our own word *dim*.

How did this idea reach Japan? It is found in the age before Buddhism, and can only be traced to the Zoroastrian propaganda. *Temanh* is 'darkness' in

Zend. It must have gone from Persia through Mongolia, and in the Mongolian and Manchurian circle of ideas we have Ahuramazda as the name of God in the modern Tartar form Hormosda. We have also fire-worship among the Mongols in the form of adoration paid in the family tent to the kitchen god, named lord of fire by Mongols, and god of the cooking stove by the Chinese.

There was no distinct teaching of the future state of rewards and punishments in Shamanism. The Persians brought it to the Tartar nations, and the reason why the Buddhists taught it was that they learned it from the Persians. They expanded the Persian heaven and hell, and made them a field for the exercise of the mercy of Buddha in saving the victims of sin and delusion.

In China in the Han dynasty the aid of poetry was afforded to help in the elevation of the minds of the people by the longing for a future world of happiness.

In the year A. D. 220 the new emperor Wei Wen-ti, who had just received the resignation of the last of the Han emperors, and himself assumed the title of Hwang-ti, was desirous of refreshment one evening in his garden. He was taken in his chariot to the western garden at Lo-yang on the Yellow River, in the province of Honan, where the palace then was. He rose from the imperial vehicle, and walked in the garden, and on returning wrote a short poem describing his reflections. It consisted of eighty words in rhyming lines of five words each. He speaks of two brooks which cooled and watered the garden, and the high trees which followed their windings. The lower branches brushed against the cover of the chariot. The upper seemed to touch

the blue sky. A fresh breeze helped the chariot wheels forward. He noticed the birds which flew up and down in front, and looking up he saw the clouds, which were just now red with the sunset glow seeming to clasp the bright moon. Brilliant stars were coming out to view here and there among the clouds. The firmament poured down a many-coloured light. Among the five colours it was hard to say which was the freshest-looking. After proceeding so far the emperor's thoughts changed. He said, What of life? and the length of life? Are Sung Chï-tzï and Wang Ch'iau the only favoured ones who can become immortal and divine?

Let us stop here and think. What made the monarch ask about the soul's immortality and divinity? Cato asked the same thing in Addison's tragedy. 'This in a moment brings me to my end. But this informs me I shall never die.' Cato knew books of philosophy, and in regard to the immortality of the soul he said: 'It must be so. Plato, thou reasonest well.' He belonged to the republican party, and as a friend of Cicero he would join in the philosophical discussions carried on then in Cicero's Tusculan Villa, and in other favourite places of resort. The one died B.C. 46 and the other B.C. 44. The immortality of the soul would be a moot question there; but how would the Chinese monarch in his pleasure garden near the Yellow River know about it? Buddhism had been two centuries in the country.

Further, the Tauist religion had a doctrine of immortality. The other personages mentioned in the poem are Tauists. Sung Chï-tse was an ancient philosopher. But there was another author of the fourth century also named Sung, and it is he that probably is here meant.

He believed in immortality, and persuaded the kings of the Chihli and Northern Shantung of those days to send messengers across the sea in search of the isles of the genii. They are the same islands that the philosophers who followed the doctrine of Lautsï believed in and wrote about. Hindu and Persian ideas of the future life had at this time so far spread in China that these ideas abound in the writings of Lietsï and Chwangtsï. The happy beings across the sea were the immortal genii of islands. Wang-ch'iau represents the immortal genii of mountains. In Chinese poetry he is a subject of favourite allusion, because he sent a message to his kindred, requesting them to meet him upon the Howshe mountain where, as a Tauist philosopher, he had been living for thirty years. At the time appointed he was seen riding in the air on a white crane. He waved adieu to the world and ascended to the realms of the genii.

This was a few years before the birth of Confucius, early in the sixth century, and therefore it took place not long before the Confucian philosophy presented in the Four Books during the fifth, fourth, and third centuries was completed. The doctrine of immortality came into the country then. Poetry kept it before the minds of the literati, while the Tauist religion rose by the force of the same idea into a powerful system, which ultimately crystallized into the modern Tauist monastic institute. The office of poetry henceforth was to furnish an explanation of the problem of life. The Confucianism of the Four Books evades this problem, and limits the field of the good man's activity to present day duties, practical morality, and utilitarian politics. Confucianism, in fact, has made China the happy land of the Comtists.

But what does the Confucianist lose? Rejecting the duty of feeding the aspirations of the human soul after immortality, which are in fact irrepressible, he resigns the duty to the poets and to the Tauist philosophers. It was for them to take up the cast-away banner inscribed with the word Immortality. The Tauist philosophers took up that banner, feeling there was in the motto 'immortality' a depth and religious force which nothing else could give them in their effort to make their religion national, and in no long time they elaborated a mythology for the souls of the dead. The mind of the poets was drawn to the subject of immortal existence. Every scholar must be a poet; that is how things work in China. He begins at ten years old to make verses. Dr. Watts in England began at four, but he was an exception. They draw images from the immortal genii. This helps them to beautify death. As we fondly heap flowers over the remains of the beloved and honoured, so they try to heap beautiful epithets on their honoured dead. For instance, the soul has mounted the white crane and gone to the upper skies. This is a faint echo from the West. Truth, when once planted in the world in regions far removed from China, spreads like the circular waves seen on the surface of a lake where a stone has fallen, each outer circle becoming fainter the farther it is from the centre of the movement. So it was with the doctrine of immortality in other countries too. How faint it is in Virgil! In the Georgics and in the Eclogues, all except the fifth, you might be in China. *Labor omnia vincit* would serve as well as a motto in China as in Italy; the agriculture of the two countries is much the same.

The industry of the Chinese people cannot be exceeded in Italy or England. But compare Dante in Italy and Milton in England as exponents of lofty thought with the best Chinese poets. What a difference! The future state has elevated thought and style, rendering it more serious, more majestic. Take Germany in the Nibelungen. The mistiness of the future state is like that of Homer and Virgil. Come down to the Christian age, and the appearance of the Church hymns, which form so important a portion of the literature of Germany, shows how the idea of immortality improves and elevates the poetic power of a nation. Then we see it in Klopstock and in Schiller, while Goethe stood apart, and did not seem to care. Among the German poets who have sung respecting the future state occur the names of Novalis, Körner, Rückert, Knapp, Gerock, and others. The late Victor von Strauss, a translator of the Tau-tê-king and other Chinese works into German, is one of the most recent.

The cause of a certain poverty of thought in Chinese poetry is not that they have not beautiful flowers, mountains, and landscapes, but that they need the elevating power of religious faith; if they obtain this gift, the poetic power will rise, and in this as in other things they will make a progressive movement forward.

The early spread of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul from the land of the Euphrates and Tigris had the result in Egypt of leading the people of that country to embalm the dead. In Greece it produced the mysteries, and Homer's beautiful episode of the interviews held by Ulysses with the departed. In India it led to the popular belief in the transmigration of

souls. Among the Buddhists it caused the writing of a large number of works describing the happiness of the good in Paradise and the torments of the wicked in hell. In China, Tartary, and Japan many millions of believers in Buddhism have died in hope of entering on the joyful life of the Western Heaven. The same teaching crossed the sea and gave to the South Sea Islanders a dim hope of future happiness beyond the grave; and such is the persistent longing which the soul has for a future state of joy that it also reached North America, and gave a sort of hope of a future state to the Indian tribes, who believe their brave warriors will live hereafter in those happy hunting-grounds which constitute for them the most desirable paradise.

The Jews when they met with the Persians were led to think more of the future state than before. The Persians on their part had received the doctrine from Babylon and Assyria. They and the Jews were alike indebted to God's first revelation in Babylonia for their faith in a coming life and a judgment of just retribution hereafter. The oldest record of that revelation is that from which the account given in Genesis of the paradise in which our first parents were placed, was translated.

We are brought back to the earthly paradise itself as the scene of the first revelation of immortality by God to His creature man. The higher criticism of the passing hour tells us that Genesis is legendary. The investigation of Eastern religions appears to me to show that Genesis is historical, and is our best guide in seeking to know the origin of religious ideas. The gradual spread of these ideas in the various countries of Asia in early times shows, beyond contradiction, that

the radiation of spiritual light throughout that continent came from the same country where science and philosophy also took their rise. The primaeval revelations of God to mankind stirred to activity the spiritual nature of humanity, and this spiritual movement was the main cause of the intellectual movement which led men to make early progress in useful inventions and in scientific thought. The Book of Genesis, by giving us Babylonian documents, unveils to us the wider scope of primaeval revelation, and helps us to see more clearly in the depths of ancient time the great love of God in revealing Himself to our first progenitors.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

*** I am indebted for Babylonian and Egyptian dates to Hommel's work *Die Vorsemitischen Kulturen in Aegypten und Babylonien.*

B. C.

4000 The supposed age of Menes, B. C. 3890, and beginning of the art of writing in Egypt.

In Egypt, Persia (then called Elam) and Babylonia high civilization prevailed at this time.

The Semites were still in High or Central Asia at this period, and their language was under the consolidating influence of the Mongolian and Tibetan types.

Gradually they occupied Persia, and this is the reason that Elam is in Genesis x. counted among the sons of Shem.

The Aryans were in Europe consolidating their language probably during the whole of this fourth millennium.

3000 At this time, when the fourth Egyptian dynasty was reigning, or thereabouts, the Aryan race came from Europe, where they had settled temporarily, and conquered the Pamir plateau and the lands watered by the Oxus and Jaxartes. They then conquered Persia and North-Western India. The Semites driven westward overwhelmed the Babylonian plain and Arabia. The Semitic mother tongue now broke up into (confusion of tongues) Babylonish-Assyrian, Aramaic, Hebrew, Phoenician, Arabic, Sabean, and Ethiopic. Accordingly in Hommel's Table of the first period of development in the Semite language, he states that about B. C. 2000 to B. C. 500 the areas occupied by the six Semitic languages were these here mentioned, as well as the trans-marine colonial possessions in Africa, Spain, Sardinia, and Sicily, which were slowly acquired at a long interval after those in Western Asia.

2870 The oldest Accadian inscription yet known is that found at Mugheir (Ur), the king Urbagas with his son Dungi, erected a temple about this time to the moon god, Sin.

2852 The Chinese emperor, Fuhi, according to the received chronology, first taught his people a rough beginning in the art of writing. We may suppose then that it was about B. C. 3000 that the Chinese entered their country, driven from Central Asia by the invasion of the Aryans, and seeking a new home where they could peacefully follow agriculture as they had done before in Turkestan and Persia. Fuhi

B.C.

also introduced the Babylonian philosophy of the elements accompanied by divination.

2700 The Chinese emperor, Hwangti, introduced among his people the use of the denary cycle for days, and the art of writing.

2600 Sixth Egyptian dynasty. There is an inscription of this date of Amar-sin, king of Eridu, found *in situ* on a brick of a temple to Ea.

2400 Eleventh Egyptian dynasty.

2356 The Chinese emperor Yan introduced from Babylon the astrolabe, the twenty-eight constellations, and the nineteen year cycle of the moon.

2300 Singashit, Semitic king of Erech (Warka), restored the temple E-anna, 'House of heaven,' founded by Ur-bagas.

2255 Age of Shun, Chinese emperor.

2200 Chammuragas, king of Babylon, conquered Larsa.
Twelfth Egyptian dynasty.
Foundation of the Chinese dynasty of Hia under the emperor Ta yü.
The age of the Hyksos, the shepherd kings of Egypt, commenced about this time.

2000 The Hyksos probably ruled Egypt from B.C. 2200 to B.C. 1700.

1766 Foundation of the Chinese dynasty Shang by the emperor Ch'êng-t'ang.
Eighteenth Egyptian dynasty, B.C. 1700 to B.C. 1450.

1490 to 1300 The nineteenth Egyptian dynasty. Exodus of the Hebrew race from Egypt under Moses. They were driven out with the Hyksos at the close of the nineteenth dynasty.

1122 The Chinese Wen wang founded the Chow dynasty.
Clepsydra and Sun-dial introduced from Babylon.

830 Nabubaliddin, king of Babylon. Cylinders of this king were found by Rassam at the ancient Agade or Accad at a spot sixteen miles S.W. of Babylon. Sippar was here also, a city under the protection of Ishtar. It is the same with Sepharvaim of scripture. The cylinders are of the age of Nabunaid. There was a Sun temple there called E-babbarra.

800 About this time Babylonian astrology was introduced in China and the worship of the Five Elemental gods.

550 Nabunaid, king of Babylon, when engaged in repairing the temple in Ur to the moon god, found a brick recording the foundation of the same temple by Urbagas of date 2370, and completion by his son Dungi.
About this time the Tauist religion was founded by Lautsï, and the Confucian religion by Confucius. Previous to this there had been but one religion in China.

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THE END.

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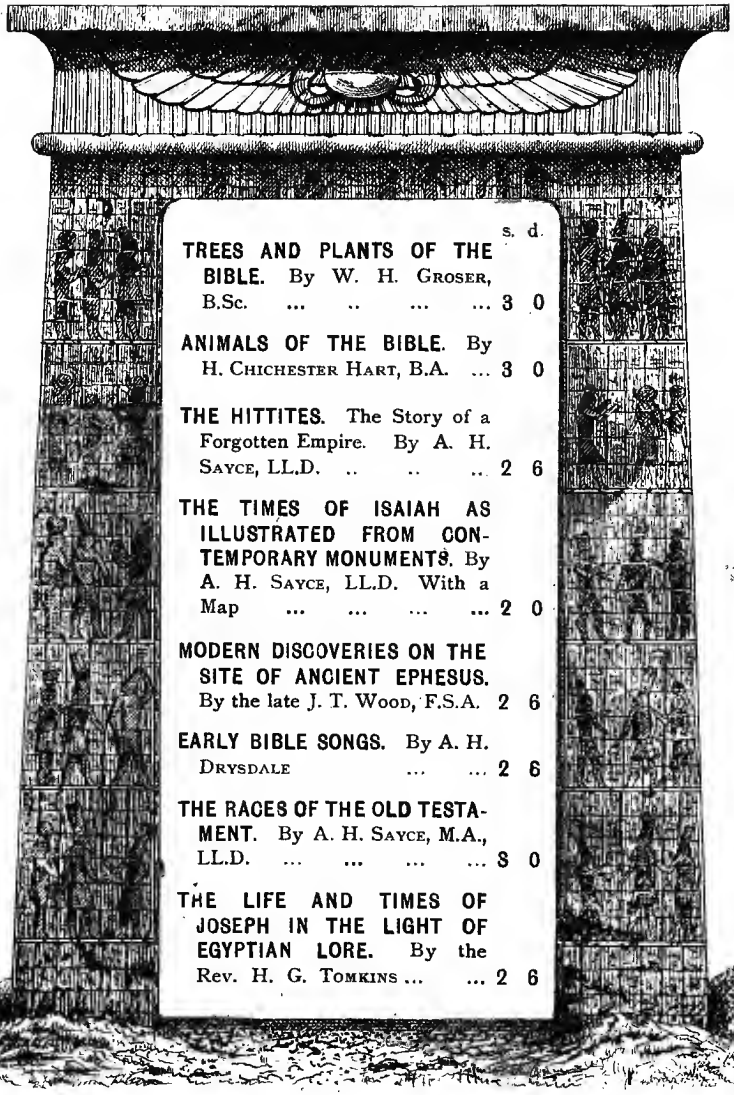

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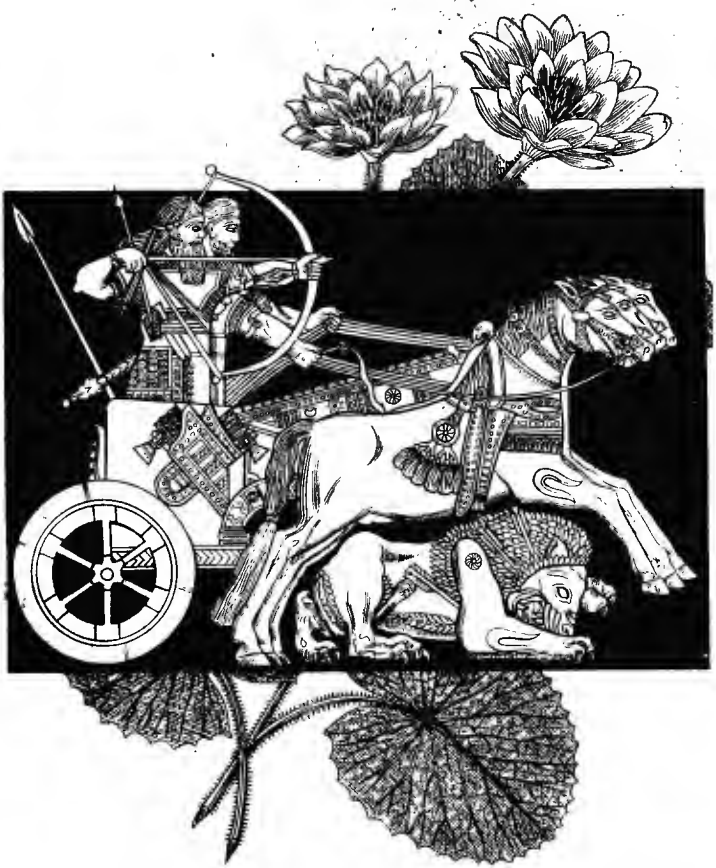

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